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History of Science, Philosophy and Culture in Indian Civilization

*General Editor* D. P. Chattopadhyaya

Volume VII, Part 12

# Arya Samaj and the Vedic Worldview

*Edited by*

RAM PRAKASH

&

JITENDRA RAMPRAKASH

Project of History of Indian Science, Philosophy and Culture (PHISPC)

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# History of Science, Philosophy and Culture in Indian Civilization

## Volume VII, Part 12

# Arya Samaj and the Vedic Worldview

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The volumes of the PROJECT ON THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE, PHILOSOPHY AND CULTURE IN INDIAN CIVILIZATION aim at discovering the main aspects of India's heritage and present them in an interrelated way. These volumes in spite of their unitary look, recognize the difference between the areas of material civilization and those of ideational culture. The Project is not being executed by a single group of thinkers who are methodologically uniform or ideologically identical in their commitments. In fact, contributions are made by different scholars with different ideological persuasions and methodological approaches. The Project is marked by what may be called "methodological pluralism". In spite of its primarily historical character, this Project, both in its conceptualization and execution, has been shaped by scholars drawn from different disciplines. It is for the first time that an endeavour of such a unique and comprehensive character has been undertaken to study critically a major world civilization like India.

This volume explores the various aspects of the Vedic texts, philosophy, dharma and the way of life from the highly original and revolutionary perspective of Swami Dayanand Saraswati and the Arya Samaj. It presents a Vedic worldview that is in accordance with the wisdom of the ancient Indian seers, and stands in sharp contrast to many of the widely popular beliefs and practices of Hinduism, held to be true by the masses and most scholars. These include some fundamental issues like the content and purpose of the Vedas, idol worship, the concept of avatārs, caste-by-birth and the socio-religious rights of women. It further provides an understanding of Vedic monotheism and Traitavāda, and themes such as the duties, rituals and the belief system ordained by the Vedic dharma.

The book also carries a brief documentation of the life and legacy of Swami Dayanand Saraswati and the emergence and spread of the Arya Samaj. It explores their impact on different aspects of the modern Indian society, culture and national life, such as the freedom struggle and its revolutionary movement, uplift of Dalits, women's emancipation, and education. It thus sketches a multifaceted narrative of a glorious contribution to the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth century Indian renaissance.

The book comprises fifty articles divided into seven sections, each of which can be useful on its own to scholars interested in a particular domain. Together, they make for a comprehensive enquiry that casts a new light on many issues of crucial importance to the Indian mind and life.

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*Dedicated to*

Prajñācakṣu Guru Virjānand Daṇḍī

the modern Pāṇini,
a relentless crusader against anārṣa granthas,
the harbinger of a new era in Sanskrit literature,
the guru who sculpted Dayanand into a seer.

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# Editors

D.P. CHATTOPADHYAYA, M.A., LL.B., Ph.D. (Calcutta and London School of Economics), D.Litt., (Honoris Causa), studied, researched on law, philosophy and history and taught at various Universities in India, Asia, Europe and USA from 1954 to 1994. Founder-Chairman of the Indian Council of Philosophical Research (1981-1990) and President-cum-Chairman of the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla (1984-1991), Chattopadhyaya is currently the Project Director of the multidisciplinary over hundred volume Project of History of Indian Science, Philosophy and Culture (PHISPC) and Chairman of the Centre for Studies in Civilizations (CSC). Among his 37 publications, authored 19 and edited or co-edited 18, are *Individuals and Societies* (1967); *Individuals and Worlds* (1976); *Sri Aurobindo and Karl Marx* (1988); *Anthropology and Historiography of Science Societies, cultures and Ideologies* (2000); *Interdisciplinary Studies in Science, Society, Value and Civilizational Dialogue* (2002); *Philosophy of Science, Phenomenology and Other Essays* (2003); *Philosophical Consciousness and Scientific Knowledge: Conceptual Linkages and Civilizational Background* (2004); *Self, Society and Science: Theoretical and Historical Perspectives* (2004); *Religion, Philosophy and Science* (2006); *Aesthetic Theories and Forms in Indian Tradition* (2008) and *Love, Life and Death* (2010). He has also held high public offices, namely, of union cabinet minister and state governor. He is a Life Member of the Russian Academy of Science and a Member of the International Institute of Philosophy, Paris. He was awarded Padma Bhushan in 1998 and Padma Vibhushan in 2009 by the Government of India.

RAM PRAKASH, M.Sc. (Hons.), Ph.D. (Chemistry), D.Sc. (Honoris Causa); currently, Chancellor, Gurukula Kangri Vishwavidyalaya, Haridwar; Chairman, Dayanand Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Kurukshetra; Chairman, Prabhu Dayal Educational Trust. Fulbright Fellow at Holy Cross College, Worcester, Massachusetts, USA (1989); UNESCO Fellow at Charles University and Heyrovsky Institute of Polarography, Praha, Czechoslovakia (1971-1972); Pro Vice-Chancellor, Kurukshetra University (1981-1984); retired as Professor from Panjab University, Chandigarh (2002). Published about 100 research papers in Chemistry and 12 books (authored 9 and edited 3) on the Vedas, Vedic texts and scholars. Among the books authored are Veda-Vimarsh, Yajna-Vimarsh (Scientific analysis of agnihotra), Satyarth-prakash-Vimarsh, Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi, Guru Virjananda Dandi, The Vedas. Edited, Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi by Lala Lajpat Rai, Works of Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi, Dandiji ki Jivani. Served as Member, Parliament (Rajya Sabha 2007-2014); State Minister, Haryana (1991-1993); Member, Haryana Vidhan Sabha (1991-96); Member, Panjab University Senate (1972-2000); Member, Syndicate (1977-1980, 1985-1992, 2000). Got the Dayananda Chair instituted at Panjab University, Chandigarh (1973). Received several awards for literary and social contributions.

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JITENDRA RAMPRAKASH, M.A. (Philosophy, Psychology). Worked on theories of creativity for Doctoral thesis. Poet, Theorist, Former TV & Radio Presenter, Professor of Media Studies. Trained two dozen TV channels in nine languages. Set-up Asia's first Poetry Film Festival, consulted for short films, produced audio-albums based on the works of leading Indian poets, edited and translated books of poetry, voiced audio-books. Presented papers, lectured at national and international conferences, institutes, universities. Poems and translations published in various anthologies and literary magazines.

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# General Introduction

## I

It is understandable that man, shaped by Nature, would like to know Nature. The human ways of knowing Nature are evidently diverse, theoretical and practical, scientific and technological, artistic and spiritual. This diversity has, on scrutiny, been found to be neither exhaustive nor exclusive. The complexity of physical nature, life-world and, particularly, human mind is so enormous that it is futile to follow a single method for comprehending all the aspects of the world in which we are situated.

One need not feel bewildered by the variety and complexity of the worldly phenomena. After all, both from traditional wisdom and our daily experience, we know that our own nature is not quite alien to the structure of the world. Positively speaking, the elements and forces that are out there in the world are also present in our body-mind complex, enabling us to adjust ourselves to our environment. Not only the natural conditions but also the social conditions of life have instructive similarities between them. This is not to underrate in any way the difference between the human ways of life all over the world. It is partly due to the variation in climatic conditions and partly due to the distinctness of production-related tradition, history and culture.

Three broad approaches are discernible in the works on historiography of civilization, comprising science and technology, art and architecture, social sciences and institutions. Firstly, some writers are primarily interested in discovering the general laws which govern all civilizations spread over different continents. They tend to underplay what they call the noisy local events of the external world and peculiarities of different languages, literatures and histories. Their accent is on the unity of Nature, the unity of science and the unity of mankind. The second group of writers, unlike the generalist or transcendentalist ones, attach primary importance to the distinctiveness of every culture. To these writers human freedom and creativity are extremely important and basic in character. Social institutions and the cultural articulations of human consciousness, they argue, are bound to be expressive of the concerned people's consciousness. By implication they tend to reject concepts like archetypal

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consciousness, universal mind and providential history. There is a third group of writers who offer a composite picture of civilizations, drawing elements both from their local and common characteristics. Every culture has its local roots and peculiarities. At the same time, it is pointed out that due to demographic migration and immigration over the centuries an element of compositeness emerges almost in every culture. When, due to a natural calamity or political exigencies people move from one part of the world to another, they carry with them, among other things, their language, cultural inheritance and their ways of living.

In the light of the above facts, it is not at all surprising that comparative anthropologists and philologists are intrigued by the striking similarity between different language families and the rites, rituals and myths of different peoples. Speculative philosophers of history, heavily relying on the findings of epigraphy, ethnography, archaeology and theology, try to show in very general terms that the particulars and universals of culture are 'essentially' or 'secretly' interrelated. The spiritual aspects of culture like dance and music, beliefs pertaining to life, death and duties, on analysis, are found to be mediated by the material forms of life like weather forecasting, food production, urbanization and invention of script. The transition from the oral culture to the written one was made possible because of the mastery of symbols and rules of measurement. Speech precedes grammar, poetry prosody. All these show how the 'matters' and 'forms' of life are so subtly interwoven.

## II

The PHISPC publications on History of Science, Philosophy and Culture in Indian Civilization, in spite of their unitary look, do recognize the differences between the areas of material civilization and those of ideational culture. It is not a work of a single author. Nor is it being executed by a group of thinkers and writers who are methodologically uniform or ideologically identical in their commitments. In conceiving the Project we have interacted with, and been influenced by, the writings and views of many Indian and non-Indian thinkers.

The attempted unity of this Project lies in its aim and inspiration. We have in India many scholarly works written by Indians on different aspects of our civilization and culture. Right from the pre-Christian era to our own time, India has drawn the attention of various countries of Asia, Europe and Africa. Some of these writings are objective and informative and many others are based on insufficient information and hearsay, and therefore not quite reliable, but they have their own value. Quality and view-points keep on changing not only because of the adequacy and inadequacy of evidence but also, and perhaps more so, because of the bias and prejudice, religious and political conviction, of the writers.

Besides, it is to be remembered that history, like Nature, is not an open book to be read alike by all. The past is mainly enclosed and only partially disclosed. History is, therefore, partly objective or 'real' and largely a matter of construction. This is one of the reasons why some historians themselves think that it is a form of literature or art.

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However, it does not mean that historical construction is 'anarchic' and arbitrary. Certainly, imagination plays an important role in it.

But its character is basically dependent upon the *questions* which the historian raises and wants to understand or answer in terms of the ideas and actions of human beings in the past ages. In a way, history, somewhat like the natural sciences, is engaged in answering questions and in exploring relationships of cause and effect between events and developments across time. While in the natural sciences, the scientist poses questions about nature in the form of hypotheses, expecting to elicit authoritative answers to such questions, the historian studies the past, partly for the sake of understanding it for its own sake and partly also for the light which the past throws upon the present, and the possibilities which it opens up for moulding the future. But the difference between the two approaches must not be lost sight of. The scientist is primarily interested in discovering laws and framing theories, in terms of which different events and processes can be connected and anticipated. His interest in the conditions or circumstances attending the concerned events is secondary. Therefore, scientific laws turn out to be basically abstract and easily expressible in terms of mathematical language. In contrast, the historian's main interest centres round the *specific* events, human ideas and actions, not *general* laws. So, the historian, unlike the scientist, is obliged to pay primary attention to the circumstances of the events he wants to study. Consequently, history, like most other humanistic disciplines, is concrete and particularist. This is not to deny the obvious truth that historical events and processes consisting of human ideas and actions show some trend or other and weave some pattern or another. If these trends and patterns were not there at all in history, the study of history as a branch of knowledge would not have been profitable or instructive. But one must recognize that historical trends and patterns, unlike scientific laws and theories, are not general or purported to be universal in their scope.

## III

The aim of this Project is to discover the main aspects of Indian culture and present them in an interrelated way. Since our culture has influenced, and has been influenced by, the neighbouring cultures of West Asia, Central Asia, East Asia and Southeast Asia, attempts have been made here to trace and study these influences in their mutuality. It is well-known that during the last three centuries, European presence in India, both political and cultural, has been very widespread. In many volumes of the Project considerable attention has been paid to Europe and through Europe to other parts of the world. For the purpose of a comprehensive cultural study of India, the existing political boundaries of the South Asia of today are more of a hindrance than help. Cultures, like languages, often transcend the bounds of changing political territories.

If the inconstant political geography is not a reliable help to the understanding of the layered structure and spread of culture, a somewhat comparable problem is encountered in the area of historical periodization. Periodization or segmenting time is a very tricky affair. When exactly one period ends and another begins is not precisely

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ascertainable. The periods of history designated as ancient, medieval and modern are purely conventional and merely heuristic in character. The varying scopes of history, local, national and continental or universal, somewhat like the periods of history, are unavoidably fuzzy and shifting. Amidst all these difficulties, the volume-wise details have been planned and worked out by the editors in consultation with the Project Director and the General Editor. I believe that the editors of different volumes have also profited from the reactions and suggestions of the contributors of individual chapters in planning the volumes.

Another aspect of Indian history which the volume-editors and contributors of the Project have carefully dealt with is the distinction and relation between civilization and culture. The material conditions which substantially shaped Indian civilization have been discussed in detail. From agriculture and industry to metallurgy and technology, from physics and chemical practices to the life sciences and different systems of medicines—all the branches of knowledge and skill which directly affect human life—form the heart of this Project. Since the periods covered by the PHISPC are extensive—prehistory, proto-history, early history, medieval history and modern history of India—we do not claim to have gone into all the relevant material conditions of human life. We had to be selective. Therefore, one should not be surprised if one finds that only some material aspects of Indian civilization have received our pointed attention, while the rest have been dealt with in principle or only alluded to.

One of the main aims of the Project has been to spell out the first principles of the philosophy of different schools, both pro-Vedic and anti-Vedic. The basic ideas of Buddhism, Jainism and Islam have been given their due importance. The special position accorded to philosophy is to be understood partly in terms of its proclaimed unifying character and partly to be explained in terms of the fact that different philosophical systems represent alternative world-views, cultural perspectives, their conflict and mutual assimilation.

Most of the volume-editors and at their instance the concerned contributors have followed a middle path between the extremes of narrativism and theoreticism. The underlying idea has been this: if in the process of working out a comprehensive Project like this every contributor attempts to narrate all those interesting things that he has in the back of his mind, the enterprise is likely to prove unmanageable. If, on the other hand, particular details are consciously forced into a fixed mould or pre-supposed theoretical structure, the details lose their particularity and interesting character. Therefore, depending on the nature of the problem of discourse, most of the writers have tried to reconcile in their presentation, the specificity of narrativism and the generality of theoretical orientation. This is a conscious editorial decision. Because, in the absence of a theory, however inarticulate it may be, the factual details tend to fall apart. Spiritual network or theoretical orientation makes historical details not only meaningful but also interesting and enjoyable.

Another editorial decision which deserves spelling out is the necessity or avoidability of duplication of the same theme in different volumes or even in the same volume. Certainly, this Project is not an assortment of several volumes. Nor is any

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volume intended to be a miscellany. This Project has been designed with a definite end in view and has a structure of its own. The character of the structure has admittedly been influenced by the variety of the themes accommodated within it. Again it must be understood that the complexity of structure is rooted in the aimed integrality of the Project itself.

## IV

Long and in-depth editorial discussion has led us to several unanimous conclusions. Firstly, our Project is going to be *unique*, unrivalled and discursive in its attempt to integrate different forms of science, technology, philosophy and culture. Its comprehensive scope, continuous character and accent on culture distinguish it from the works of such Indian authors as P.C. Ray, B.N. Seal, Binoy Kumar Sarkar and S.N. Sen and also from such Euro-American writers as Lynn Thorndike, George Sarton and Joseph Needham. Indeed, it would be no exaggeration to suggest that it is for the first time that an endeavour of so comprehensive a character, in its exploration of the social, philosophical and cultural characteristics of a distinctive world civilization—that of India—has been attempted in the domain of scholarship.

Secondly, we try to show the linkages between different branches of learning as different modes of experience in an *organic* manner and without resorting to a kind of reductionism, materialistic or spiritualistic. The internal dialectics of organicism without reductionism allows fuzziness, discontinuity and discreteness within limits.

Thirdly, positively speaking, different modes of human experience—scientific, artistic, etc.—have their own individuality, not necessarily autonomy. Since all these modes are modification and articulation of *human* experience, these are bound to have between them some finely graded commonness. At the same time, it has been recognized that reflection on different areas of experience and investigation brings to light new insights and findings. Growth of knowledge requires humans, in general, and scholars, in particular, to identify the distinctness of different branches of learning.

Fourthly, to follow simultaneously the twin principles of: (a) individuality of human experience as a whole, and (b) individuality of diverse disciplines, is not at all an easy task. Overlap of themes and duplication of the terms of discourse become unavoidable at times. For example, in the context of *Dharmaśāstra*, the writer is bound to discuss the concept of value. The same concept also figures in economic discourse and also occurs in a discussion on fine arts. The conscious editorial decision has been that, while duplication should be kept to its minimum, for the sake of intended clarity of the themes under discussion, their reiteration must not be avoided at high intellectual cost.

Fifthly, the scholars working on the Project are drawn from widely different disciplines. They have brought to our notice an important fact that has clear relevance to our work. Many of our contemporary disciplines like economics and sociology did not exist, at least not in their present form, just two centuries ago or so. For example, before the middle of the nineteenth century, sociology as a distinct branch of

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knowledge was unknown. The term is said to have been coined first by the French philosopher Auguste Comte in 1838. Obviously, this does not mean that the issues discussed in sociology were not there. Similarly, Adam Smith's (1723–90) famous work *The Wealth of Nations* is often referred to as the first authoritative statement of the principles of (what we now call) economics. Interestingly enough, the author was equally interested in ethics and jurisprudence. It is clear from history that the nature and scope of different disciplines undergo change, at times very radically, over time. For example, in India by '*Arthaśāstra*' does not mean the science of economics as understood today. Besides the principles of economics, the *Arthaśāstra* of Kautilya discusses at length those of governance, diplomacy and military science.

Sixthly, this brings us to the next editorial policy followed in the Project. We have tried to remain very conscious of what may be called indeterminacy or inexactness of translation. When a word or expression of one language is translated into another, some loss of meaning or exactitude seems to be unavoidable. This is true not only in the bilingual relations like Sanskrit-English and Sanskrit-Arabic, but also in those of Hindi-Tamil and Hindi-Bengali. In recognition of the importance of language-bound and context-relative character of meaning we have solicited from many learned scholars, contributions written in vernacular languages. In order to minimize the miseffect of semantic inexactitude we have solicited translational help of that type of bilingual scholars who know both English and the concerned vernacular language, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Bengali or Marathi.

Seventhly and finally, perhaps the place of technology as a branch of knowledge in the composite universe of science and art merits some elucidation. Technology has been conceived in very many ways, e.g., as autonomous, as 'standing reserve', as liberating or enlargemental, and alienative or estrangemental force. The studies undertaken by the Project show that, in spite of its much emphasized mechanical and alienative characteristics, technology embodies a very useful mode of knowledge that is peculiar to man. The Greek root words of technology are *techne* (art) and *logos* (science). This is the basic justification of recognizing technology as closely related to both epistemology, the discipline of valid knowledge, and axiology, the discipline of freedom and values. It is in this context that we are reminded of the definition of man as *homo technikos*. In Sanskrit, the word closest to *techne* is *kalā* which means any practical art, any mechanical or fine art. In the Indian tradition, in *Śaivatantra*, for example, among the arts (*kalā*) are counted dance, drama, music, architecture, metallurgy, knowledge of dictionary, encyclopaedia and prosody. The closeness of the relation between arts and sciences, technology and other forms of knowledge are evident from these examples and was known to the ancient people. The human quest for knowledge involves the use of both head and hand. Without mind, the body is a corpse and the disembodied mind is a bare abstraction. Even for our appreciation of what is beautiful and the creation of what is valuable, we are required to exercise both our intellectual competence and physical capacity. In a manner of speaking, one might rightly affirm that our psychosomatic structure is a functional connector between what we are and what we could be, between the physical and the beyond. To suppose that there is a clear-cut distinction between the physical world and the psychosomatic one amounts to

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denial of the possible emergence of higher logico-mathematical, musical and other capacities. The very availability of aesthetic experience and creation proves that the supposed distinction is somehow overcome by what may be called the bodily self or embodied mind.

V

The ways of classification of arts and sciences are neither universal nor permanent. In the Indian tradition, in the *Ṛgveda*, for example, *vidyās* (or sciences) are said to be four in number: (i) *Trayī*, the triple Veda; (ii) *Ānvīkṣikī*, logic and metaphysics; (iii) *Daṇḍa-nīti*, science of governance; (iv) *Vārttā*, practical arts such as agriculture, commerce, medicine, etc. Manu speaks of a fifth *vidyā* viz., *Ātma-vidyā*, knowledge of self or of spiritual truth. According to many others, *vidyā* has 14 divisions, viz., the four Vedas, the six *Vedāṅgas*, the *Purāṇas*, the *Mīmāṁsā*, *Nyāya*, and *Dharma* or law. At times, the four *Upa-vedas* are also recognized by some as *vidyā*. *Kalās* are said to be 33 or even 64.

In the classical tradition of India, the word *śāstra* has at times been used as a synonym for *vidyā*. *Vidyā* denotes an instrument of teaching, manual or compendium of rules, religious or scientific treatise. The word *śāstra* is usually found after the word referring to the subject of the book, e.g., *Dharma-śāstra, Artha-śāstra, Alaṁkāra-śāstra* and *Mokṣa-śāstra*. Two other words which have been frequently used to denote different branches of knowledge are *jñāna* and *vijñāna*. While *jñāna* means knowing, knowledge, especially the higher form of it, *vijñāna* stands for the act of distinguishing or discerning, understanding, comprehending and recognizing. It means worldly or profane knowledge as distinguished from *jñāna*, knowledge of the divine.

It must be said here that the division of knowledge is partly conventional and partly administrative or practical. It keeps on changing from culture to culture, from age to age. It is difficult to claim that the distinction between *jñāna* and *vijñāna* or that between science and art is universal. It is true that even before the advent of the modern age, both in the East and the West, two basic aspects of science started gaining recognition. One is the *specialized character* of what we call scientific knowledge. The other is the concept of *trained skill* which was brought close to scientific knowledge. In medieval Europe, the expression 'the seven liberal sciences' has very often been used simultaneously with 'the seven liberal arts', meaning thereby, the group of studies by the *Trivium* (Grammar, Logic and Rhetoric) and *Quadrivium* (Arithmetic, Music, Geometry and Astronomy).

It may be observed here, as has already been alluded to earlier, that the division between different branches of knowledge, between theory and practice, was not pushed to an extreme extent in the early ages. *Praxis*, for example, was recognized as the prime *techne*. The Greek word, *technologia* stood for systematic treatment, for example, of Grammar. *Praxis* is not the mere application of *theoria*, unified vision or integral outlook, but it also stands for the active impetus and base of knowledge. In India, one often uses the terms *Prayukti-vidyā* and *Prayodyogika-vidyā* to emphasize the practical or

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applicative character of knowledge. *Prayoga* or application is both the test and base of knowledge. Doing is the best way of knowing and learning.

That one and the same word may mean different 'things' or concepts in different cultures and thus create confusion has already been stated before. Two such words which in the context of this Project under discussion deserve special mention are *dharma* and *itihāsa*. Ordinarily, *dharma* in Sanskrit-rooted languages is taken to be conceptual equivalent of the English word *religion*. But, while the meaning of religion is primarily theological, that of *dharma* seems to be manifold. Literally, *dharma* stands for that which is established or that which holds people steadfastly together. Its other meanings are law, rule, usage, practice, custom, ordinance and statute. Spiritual or moral merit, virtue, righteousness and good works are also denoted by it. Further, *dharma* stands for natural qualities like burning (of fire), liquidity (of water) and fragility (of glass). Thus one finds that meanings of *dharma* are of many types – legal, social, moral, religious or spiritual, and even ontological or physical. All these meanings of *dharma* have received due attention of the writers in the relevant contexts of different volumes.

This Project, being primarily historical as it is, has naturally paid serious attention to the different concepts of history – epic-mythic, artistic-narrative, scientific-causal, theoretical and ideological. Perhaps the point that must be mentioned first about history is that it is not a correct translation of the Sanskrit word *itihāsa*. Etymologically, it means what really happened (*iti-ha-āsa*). But, as we know, in the Indian tradition *purāṇa* (legend, myth, tale, etc.), *gāthā* (ballad), *itivṛtta* (description of past occurrence, event, etc.), *ākhyāyikā* (short narrative) and *vaṃśa-carita* (genealogy) have been consciously accorded a very important place. Things started changing with the passage of time and particularly after the effective presence of Islamic culture in India. Islamic historians, because of their own cultural moorings and the influence of the Semitic and Graeco-Roman cultures on them, were more particular about their facts, figures and dates than their Indian predecessors. Their aim to bring history close to statecraft, social conditions and the lives and teachings of the religious leaders imparted a mundane character to this branch of learning. The Europeans whose political appearance on the Indian scene became quite perceptible only towards the end of the eighteenth century brought in with them their own view of historiography in their cultural baggage. The impact of the Newtonian Revolution in the field of history was very faithfully worked out, among others, by David Hume (1711–76) in *History of Great Britain from the Invasion of Julius Caesar to the Revolution of 1688* (6 Vols., 1754–62) and Edward Gibbon (1737–94) in *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (6 Vols., 1776–88). Their emphasis on the principles of causality, datability and continuity/linearity of historical events introduced the spirit of the scientific revolution in European historiography. The introduction of English education in India and the exposure of the elites of the country to it largely account for the decline of the traditional concept of *itihāsa* and the rise of the post-Newtonian scientific historiography. Gradually, Indian writers of our own history and cultural heritage started using more and more European concepts and categories. This is not to suggest that the impact of the European historiography on

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Indian historians was entirely negative. On the contrary, it imparted an analytical and critical temper which motivated many Indian historians of the nineteenth century to try to discover and represent our heritage in a new way.

## VI

The principles which have been followed for organizing the subjects of different volumes under this Project may be stated in this way. We have kept in view the main structures which are discernible in the decomposible composition of the world. The first structure may be described as physical and chemical. The second structure consists, broadly speaking, of biology, psychology and epistemology. The highest and the most abstract structure nests many substructures within it, for example, logic, mathematics and musical notes. It is well-known that the substructures within each structure are interactive, i.e., not isolable. The more important point to be noted in this connection is that the basic three structures of the world, viz., (a) physico-chemical, (b) bio-psychological, and (c) logico-mathematical are all simultaneously open to upward and downward causation. In other words, while the physico-chemical structure can causally influence the bio-psychological one and the latter can causally influence the most abstract logico-mathematical, the reverse process of causation is also operative in the world. In spite of its relative abstractness and durability, the logico-mathematical world has its downward causal impact on our bio-psychological and epistemological processes and products. And the latter can also bring about change in the structures of the physical world and its chemical composition. Applied physics and bio-technology make the last point abundantly clear.

Many philosophers, life scientists, and social scientists highlight the point that nature loves hierarchies. Herbert Simon, the economist and the management scientist, speaks of four steps of partial ordering of our world, namely, (i) chemical substances, (ii) living organisms, tissues and organs, (iii) genes, chromosomes and DNA, and (iv) human beings, the social organizations, programmes and information process. All these views are in accord with the anti-reductionist character of our Project. Many biologists defend this approach by pointing out that certain characteristics of biological phenomena and process like unpredictability, randomness, uniqueness, magnitude of stochastic perturbations, complexity and emergence cannot be reduced without recourse to physical laws.

The main subjects dealt with in different volumes of the Project are connected not only conceptually and synchronically but also historically or diachronically. For pressing practical reasons, however, we did not aim at presenting the prehistorical, proto-historical and historical past of India in a continuous or chronological manner. Besides, it has been shown in the presentation of the PHISPC that the process of history is non-linear. And this process is to be understood in terms of human praxis and an absence of general laws in history. Another point which deserves special mention is that the editorial advisors have taken a conscious decision not to make this historical Project primarily political. We felt that this area of history has always been receiving extensive attention. Therefore, the customary discussion of dynastic rule and succession will not

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be found in a prominent way in this series. Instead, as said before, most of the available space has been given to social, scientific, philosophical and other cultural aspects of Indian civilization.

Having stated this, it must be admitted that our departure from conventional style of writing Indian history is not total. We have followed an inarticulate framework of time in organizing and presenting the results of our studies. The first volume, together with its parts, deals with the prehistorical period to AD 300. The next two volumes, together with their parts, deal with, among other things, the development of social and political institutions and philosophical and scientific ideas from AD 300 to the beginning of the eleventh century. The next period with which this Project is concerned spans from the twelfth century to the early part of the eighteenth century. The last three centuries constitute the fourth period covered by this Project. But, as said before, the definition of all these periods by their very nature are inexact and merely indicative.

Two other points must be mentioned before I conclude this General Introduction to the series. The history of some of the subjects like religion, language and literature, philosophy, science and technology cannot for obvious reason be squeezed within the cramped space of the periodic moulds. Attempts to do so result in thematic distortion. Therefore, the reader will often see the overflow of some ideas from one period to another. I have already drawn attention to this tricky and fuzzy and also the misleading aspect of the periodization of history, if pressed beyond a point.

Secondly, strictly speaking, history knows no end. Every age rewrites its history. Every generation, beset with new issues, problems and questions, looks back to its history and reinterprets and renews its past. This shows why history is not only contemporaneous but also futural. Human life actually knows no separative wall between its past, present and future. Its cognitive enterprises, moral endeavours and practical activities are informed of the past, oriented by the present and addressed to the future. This process persists, consciously or unconsciously, wittingly or unwittingly. In the narrative of this Project, we have tried to represent this complex and fascinating story of Indian civilization.

*Centre for Studies in Civilizations*
*New Delhi and Kolkata*

**D.P. Chattopadhyaya**
General Editor

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AUROBINDO (late), philosopher, yogi and poet, was imprisoned by the British for writing against British rule in India, a spiritual reformer, the central theme of his vision was the evolution of human life into a life divine, founded Sri Aurobindo Ashram in 1926 in Puducherry, his main literary works are *The Life Divine, Synthesis of Yoga* and *Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol,* he had written profusely on philosophy, Vedas, Upaniṣads and the Bhagvad Gita.

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K.C. YADAV, retired as Professor and Head of History Department, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, known for his research work on Haryana, Punjab Freedom Struggle and Arya Samaj, served as Director, Haryana Academy of History and Culture, Gurgaon (2010-2014), Visiting Professor, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Japan (1980-1981), Fellow Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland (FRAS), London, 1974, his important publications include *History of Haryana, Haryana: History and Culture, Punjab: Colonial Challenge and Popular Response, India Divided 1947, Bhagat Singh* (5 vols., co-editor), *1857 The Role of Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh,* member of several academic and cultural organisations.

KULTAR SINGH SARDAR (late), born in Nawankot, Lahore (now in Pakistan), younger brother of Shaheed Bhagat Singh, a firm Arya Samajist, jailed during freedom struggle (1939-45), took fast unto death twice during that period, settled in Saharanpur (U.P.) in 1951, was elected to U.P. assembly in 1974, served as State Minister, worked for communal harmony among the Sikhs in America, Canada and Britain during the days of terrorism in Punjab in 1986, died on September 4, 2004.

KUSHAL DEV (late), Shastri, Ph.D. in Hindi, taught in Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose College, Nanded (Maharashtra), author of several books regarding Arya Samaj, Swami Dayanand, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and Dalit emancipation, worked against the system of caste by birth, encouraged inter-caste marriages.

LAJPAT RAI LALA (late), a devout disciple of Swami Dayanand and great martyr in the cause of India's struggle for freedom, played a prominent role in establishing D.A.V. College, Lahore and took part in Congress politics, was arrested and deported to Burma in 1907, visited England, United States and Japan, founded Indian Home Rule League in New York in October 1917, founder Punjab National Bank, founded and edited *Punjabee, Young India, The People, Bande Matram,* authored several books including *The Arya Samaj, Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi, Maharshi Swami Dayanand aur unkā Kām,* founder of Servants of Peoples Society, presided over a special session of the Indian National Congress, Calcutta, braved lathi charge while leading a procession against Simon Commission, October 30, 1929; succumbed to injuries on November 17, 1929.

MAHAVIR AGRAWAL, former Vice-Chancellor, Uttarakhand Sanskrit University, Haridwar, Vice-Chairman, Uttarakhand Sanskrit Academy, Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Registrar, Gurukula Kangri Vishwavidyalaya, Haridwar, chief editor *Gurukula Patrika* for 15 years, guided more than 60 scholars for their Ph.D. degree.

MANJULATA VIDYARTHI, M.A., Ph.D. in Hindi, taught Hindi in Radha Devi Goenka Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Akola, area of specialization is contribution of Rishi Dayanand to Hindi language and literature.

MOHD. HANIF KHAN SHASTRI, M.A. (Sanskrit), Acharya, Ph.D. on Mahāmantra Gāyatrī aur Sūraḥ Fātiḥa kā Tulnātmak Adhyayan, authored eight books including *Mohangitā,*

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*Geeta aur Qurān mein Sāmanjasya, Vedon mein Mānavādhikār aur Meljol*, working for communal harmony by highlighting similarities between Hindu and Muslim religions, honoured by Rashtrapati of India.

MUKUL RAJ MEHTA, Professor in the Department of Philosophy and Religion, Banaras Hindu University (B.H.U.), M.A. in Indian Philosophy and Religion with Gold medal, Ph.D. from B.H.U., specialization in Jain Philosophy, published two books and more than thirty-five research papers, chief editor *Anushīlan* (research journal) since 2005, has been referred in the books on Indian philosophy, culture and religion published from U.S.A., S. Korea and Australia etc., associated with more than twenty Projects sponsored by UGC, PHIPSC, CSC, IIAS Shimla, ICPR (all under MHRD, Govt. of India), delivered lectures in India and abroad, co-ordinated eight national seminars, participated in more than twenty-five international and two hundred national seminars and conferences in various capacities, produced forty Ph.D. students, member of several academic and administrative bodies.

O.N.GANGOO, an Arya Samaj scholar and activist from Mauritius, M.A. and Ph.D from India, retired as Senior Lecturer from Mahatma Gandhi Institute, Moka, a keen student of Hindu scriptures, authored eleven books including The Arya Samaj in Mauritius and South Africa, chief editor of *Āryodaya* (Port Louis), received several honours including Honourary Citizenship of Mahebourg, OSK by the Government of the Republic of Mauritius, Arya Ratna by Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha New Delhi, Hindi Ratna by Hindi Speaking Union, Mauritius.

OM PRAKASH PANDEY, M.A., Ph.D., D.Litt., former Professor and Head Department of Sanskrit, Lucknow University, Lucknow, visiting Professor in Sourbone Nouvelle University of Paris (France), Member Secretary Maharshi Sandipani Rashtriya Veda Vidya Pratisthān, Ujjain, authored several books and research papers, recipient of various awards including, Veda Ratna, Sahitya Academy Award and Vishista Puraskar of U.P. Sanskrit Sansthān, Lucknow.

PRACHETAS, M.A., Ph.D. in Sanskrit, edited a rare manuscript of Ṛgvedic commentary written by Bhattgovind (13th century), has written a book entitled *Śikṣā Vedāṅga kī Pramparā aur Acharya Apishali*, area of specialization is Vedic studies and Manuscriptology.

R.C. JEEWAN, M.Sc. in Chemistry, severed as Principal, D.A.V. College, Kangra and Chandigarh for 27 years, life member of D.A.V. Movement, Chairman/Manager of several institutions run by D.A.V. College Managing Committee, New Delhi, President, Arya Pradeshik Pratinidhi Upasabha, Himachal Pradesh for several years.

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RAGHUVIR VEDALANKAR, Vedacharya, Ph.D. in Sanskrit, served as Associate Professor, Ramjas College, University of Delhi for 37 years, author of 25 books including Vedic Itihas Vimarsh, Vedic Śabdārtha-Vimarsh, Kāśikā Vyākhyā, honoured by various organizations and Sanskrit Academy Delhi and U.P. for his literary works.

RAJENDRA JIGYASU, M.A. in History, served as lecturer in D.A.V. College, Sholapur, D.A.V. College, Abohar and Gopichand Arya Mahila College, Abohar, well - versed in Hindi, English, Urdu and Persian, has written large number of books on Arya Samaj and biographies, area of specialization is history and comparative study of religions, Arya Samaj scholar and preacher, regularly writes in various Arya Samaj journals, took Vanaprastha.

RAJENDRA VIDYALANKAR, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D. in Sanskrit, Professor and Director, Institute of Indological Studies, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, published several research papers, running Satyarth Prakashan, Kurukshetra for publishing and free distribution of Vedic literature, currently O.S.D. to Governor, Himachal Pradesh.

RANVIR SINGH, Vidyalankar, M.A., Ph.D. (Skt. Lexicography), served as lecturer in V.V.B. I.S. & I.S., Hoshiarpur, retired as Professor – Director Institute of Sanskrit and Indological Studies, Kurukshetra University, worked on 'Mahābhārata Word Concordance' as its Incharge, currently Director, G.L. Nanda Centre of Ethics and Philosophy, Kurukshetra University, guided 20 scholars for Ph.D. degree.

SATISH PRAKASH, born in Guyana, South America, edited and authored seven books including commentary on *Sanskarvidhi,* graduated from the University of Guyana, studied Sanskrit Grammar and Etymology according to ancient method of instructions, earned Ph.D. degree from Gurukula Kangri Vishwavidyalaya, Haridwar, studied Vedic literature, founder Acharya of Maharshi Dayanand Gurukula, in Jamaica, Queens, New York since 2003, currently teaches Sanskrit Language and literature to High School and University Students in America.

SNEH MAHAJAN, M.A. in Philosophy, a woman social activist, retired as Principal M.C.M. D.A.V. College for Women, Chandigarh, served as Director, D.A.V. Public Schools run by D.A.V. College Managing Committee, New Delhi.

SOMDEV SHATANSHU, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D., Professor and Head, Sanskrit Department, Chairman, Prāchya Vidyā faculty, Gurukula Kangri Vishwavidyalaya, Haridwar, published about 40 research papers, chief editor *Pāvamānī* and *Gurukula Patrikā* (both quarterly magazines).

SOMPAL SHASTRI, M.A. Economics, LL.B., well-versed in Hindi, Sanskrit and English, served as M.P. (Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha), Minister of State for Agriculture and Water Resources, Govt. of India, Member Planning Commission and Chairman,

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National Commission on Farmers, Government of India, widely travelled, author of several books.

SURENDER KUMAR, M.A. (Hindi, Sanskrit), Ph.D., Vice-Chancellor, Gurukula Kangri Vishwavidyalaya, Haridwar, published more than 200 research papers and popular articles, authored and edited 24 books, worked on interpolations in Manusmriti.

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SURYA DEVI popularly known as Chaturveda, studied Aṣṭādhyāyī, Mahābhāṣya and other grammar books under Dr. Prajna Devi and Acharya Medha Devi, currently Pracharya, Pāṇini Kanya Mahavidyalaya, Varanasi, author of several books, honoured with Pandit Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya, Arya Vidya Bhaskar, Veda-Vedāṅga Puraskārs and Anuchān Sahitya Puraskār, Nagpur.

SUTINDER SINGH NOOR (late), an eminent Punjabi poet and critic, won the Sahitya Akademi Award in 2004 for his book of criticism *Kavitā dī Bhoomikā*, better known for his criticism, former Head of the Department of Punjabi, Delhi University, and editor of Punjabi Akademi Journal *Samdarshi*.

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VALSON THAMPU REVD., Ph.D. in Theology, Christian author, professor, former Principal St Stephen's College, Delhi, founder member of the National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions (NCEI), Govt. of India, his translation of *The Scent of the Other Side* won the Crossword award, a prolific author and daring thinker on religious reform, he is also an accomplished translator, winning the Cross Word Award for the best translator from all Indian languages into English (2010).

VEDPAL, M.A., Ph.D.; Retired as Reader from JVPG College, Baraut (U.P.), specialization Vedic Canonical Literature particularly Kalpa Sūtras, produced Hindi commentaries on Pāraskar Gṛhyasūtra, Kāśikā (first chapter), Laghu Siddhānt Kaumudī, editor *Prāchya Vidyā Anusandhānam* (Sanskrit Journal).

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VIRENDRA K. ALANKAR, M.A., Ph.D. and D.Litt. in Mīmāṇsā Philosophy, Professor of Sanskrit and Head of Dayanand Chair for Vedic Studies at Panjab University, Chandigarh, author of ten books on Veda, Philosophy, Sanskrit Grammar and Pali, conferred Mahakavi Bānabhatta award and Maharshi Vedavyāsa award by Government of Haryana for his contribution to Sanskrit studies, also awarded Sanskrit Seva Samman and Vedic Vidwat Samman.

## Translators

A.K. ANAND, M.A. (Economics, Jammu University), M. Lib. Science (Delhi University) standing first in both examinations, retired as Chief-Librarian and Head of Library and Information Science Department, Panjab University, Chandigarh, Information Scientist, academic administrator, researcher and teacher of long standing, widely travelled.

BHAVESH MERJA, B.E. (Chemical), working as Chief Manager in GNFC Ltd. (Bharuch, Gujarat), translated/edited several books – mainly from Hindi to Gujarati, served as President, Arya Samaj, Bharuch for about 2 years.

DHARMA, M.A. Ph.D. (Sanskrit), taught in Lakshmibai College, University of Delhi for 37 years, received several awards for promotion and popularisation of Sanskrit language, published several articles and one book.

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RAMVIR, Ph.D. (Sanskrit) from Gurukula Kangri Vishwavidyalaya, Haridwar, retired as Associate Professor of Sanskrit, Government Evening College, Faridabad (Haryana), known for his lyrics and poems in Hindi.

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# Diacritics for Transliteration*

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| अ | आ | इ | ई | उ | ऊ |
| a | ā | i | ī | u | ū |
| ऋ | ए | ऐ | ओ | औ | अं |
| ṛ | e | ai | o | au | aṁ/aṃ |
| अः | | | | | |
| aḥ | | | | | |

अनुस्वार ( ं ) ṁ, विसर्ग (:) ḥ, ( ँ ) ñ

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| क् | ख् | ग् | घ् | ङ् |
| k | kh | g | gh | ṅ |
| च् | छ् | ज् | झ् | ञ् |
| c | ch | j | jh | ñ |
| ट् | ठ् | ड् | ढ् | ण् |
| ṭ | ṭh | ḍ | ḍh | ṇ |
| त् | थ् | द् | ध् | न् |
| t | th | d | dh | n |
| प् | फ् | ब् | भ् | म् |
| p | ph | b | bh | m |
| य् | र् | ल् | व् | |
| y | r | l | v | |
| श् | ष् | स् | ह् | ऽ |
| ś | ṣ | s | h | ' |
| क्ष् | त्र् | ज्ञ् | | |
| kṣ | tr | jñ | | |

* For variations in the use of these diacritic marks, please see the Editor's Introduction.

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# Introduction

*Jitendra Ramprakash*

## I

In the convenience of adjudging the Arya Samaj as a mere sect or movement of Hinduism, and of relegating Swami Dayanand, though respectfully, to the status of an important social-reformer, lies a great deception.

It allows one to gloss over the very essence of the man and the nature of his mission.

Swami Dayanand Saraswati (1824-1883) was a colossus indeed. A towering figure of the Indian renaissance, a scholar of the highest order, a radical thinker, a revolutionary sage, an epochal visionary and a sublime soul with indomitable courage, whose only mantra in life was 'truth'. His work extended beyond the confines of a single domain and impacted almost all aspects of the Indian life – from religion to reform, from spirituality to social regeneration, from politics to education, from a rediscovery of the Vedic Dharma to the uplift of Dalits and the emancipation of women. In fact, his work in any of these domains alone, would have sufficed to ensure his place in Indian history, but in its totality his multifaceted impact on the modern Indian society, politics and life remains truly unparalleled.

His was a movement, not of reform, but of revolutionary change.

Dayanand single-handedly, brought down, piece-by-piece, the hitherto invincible fort of the dharmic establishment – whose dark, demonic shadow had loomed large over the Indian mind and life, for many a millennium. He questioned and forced into submission, the powerful priestly class that had come to lord over the land and the destiny of its people, in all matters, in and beyond life and death. He presented an unprecedented challenge to the Hindu orthodoxy on all fronts, including – polytheism

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with its millions of gods and goddesses, the concept of avatārs and their myths, the form and essence of the rituals, and the practice of idol worship that had come to be, and remains, the most popular form of worship among the Hindus. Moreover, he unleashed an unrelenting attack on a deeply discriminatory, exploitative and inhumane system that propagated numerous ills like caste-by-birth, the burning of widows on the pyres of their husbands, and the denial of basic human and religious rights to the Shudras and women. In the process, he shook the very foundations of a socio-religious-political order, hallowed for centuries.

Dayanand rescued the Dharma and its practice from the greed of the elite, and restored them to the masses. He waged a struggle that simply has no parallel in the history of India. Many a great man before him, had rebelled against and rejected or attempted to reform the system, but Dayanand is the only one in recorded history, who demolished its authority and facade on the grounds of its own scriptures. Understandably, he faced much abuse and many attacks. The orthodoxy branded him as an atheist and a non-Hindu. He was pelted with stones, poisonous snakes were thrown at him, goons were let loose upon him and many attempts were made to poison or drown him. But Dayanand remained unwavering and unruffled. Even when, after many failed attempts, he was fatally poisoned in 1883, he bore the pain in his final days with equanimity, without a word of complaint or a curse for his killers. The one who had administered sannyāsa to a young seeker and had given him the ascetic name 'Dayanand' – did he intuit that in the end, when the sannyāsī would be administered poison – not knowledge, not courage, not the fire of change would define him, but that name would – 'Dayanand', the bliss of compassion!

By the time Dayanand's jīvan-līlā was over, he had accomplished quite the unthinkable. His luminous intellect had realised the dream of a frail blind scholar, his Guru, the Dandi Swami, Virjanand; his profound voice had silenced the mahapandits whose pronouncements were regarded as the word of God itself; his bold hands had demolished the imposing edifice of an oppressive system; and at his untiring feet, lay the debris of an old decadent order that even most of the all-conquering emperors and a mighty colonial government had not the courage to challenge directly. Amidst this dust and rubble, he re-established the foundations of an ancient spiritual tradition, resurrected the Vedic dharma, and envisioned the contours of a new India.

Swami Dayanand's countless admirers across ideologies and religions comprise a galaxy of modern Indian luminaries. Dr. Rajendra Prasad thought of him as "a great saint, rather a prophet"; Rabindranath Tagore called him, "the great path-maker"; Subhash Cahndra Bose termed him a 'Karmayogi' and "one of the most powerful personalities who have shaped modern India"; Sir Syed Ahmad Khan opined that "it behoved men of all religions to respect him" and that "He was such a great man as has no equal in India". Annie Besant pointed out that "Swami Dayananda was the first to proclaim India for Indians" and Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel declared in no uncertain terms that "He actually laid the foundation of India's freedom." C. Rajagopalachari described him as one who, "met the evil boldly"; Gandhiji acknowledged "his unequivocal pronouncement against untouchability" as undoubtedly "among the many rich legacies" he has left us; and Dr. S. Radhakrishnan underlined the fact that "Some

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of the reforms introduced in the Indian Constitution had been inspired by his teachings." Lala Lajpat Rai encapsulated his vision perfectly that "Dayanand dreamed of a regenerated India" – spiritual, wise, learned, noble, chivalrous and great. Paying a tribute to this incomparable modern Indian, Sri Aurobindo wrote,

> Among the great company of remarkable figures that will appear to the eye of posterity at the head of the Indian Renascence, one stands out by himself with peculiar and solitary distinctness, one unique in his type as he is unique in his work. It is as if one were to walk for a long time amid a range of hills rising to a greater or lesser altitude, but all with sweeping contours, green-clad, flattering the eye even in their most bold and striking elevation. But amidst them all, one hill stands apart, piled up in sheer strength, a mass of bare and puissant granite, with verdure on its summit, a solitary pine jutting out into the blue, a great cascade of pure, vigorous and fertilising water gushing out from its strength as a very fountain of life and health to the valley. Such is the impression created on my mind by Dayananda.

Yet the deception suits many! The old order, though defeated, was never dead. Once Dayanand was gone, the system began resurrecting itself, this time by garlanding him and then by relegating his thought and work to the margins of history.

To approach Dayanand is to engage with a challenge that cannot be glossed over by veneration. Dayanand represents not dissent, but a counterpoint to our fundamental conceptions of Hinduism and the Vedas. He demands of one, the active rejection of all discrimination, injustice and ills propagated in the name of dharma, and the embracing of a radical new thinking towards religion and society. That is a challenge, few seem willing to undertake.

In trying to point out one deception however, I do not wish to be guilty of another – that of uncritical appreciation, another convenient 'garlanding', a 'pedestalisation' that is even more dangerous than marginalisation. By blindly apotheosizing someone, we not only divest ourselves of a critical and hence meaningful understanding of the person, we also escape the inconvenience of following in the blazing footsteps of a path-breaker, as some do, in the case of Dayanand too. Dayanand evolved 'from a seeker to a sage', as R.K. Chauhan describes in the heart-felt opening article of this volume, by regarding logic as a sage itself - 'tarkamarishi'. It is only in order that anyone seeking to understand him or his work should do so, in the same spirit.

This book is a study of the monumental impact of Swami Dayanand Saraswati and the Arya Samaj on the Indian life. More importantly, it is an insight into the real Vedic worldview and the way of life – one that stands in opposition to most popular conceptions of the Vedas and Hinduism.

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II

Often, a text defines a people.

A scripture, a book, a prophecy, a speech, a slogan – can become the definitive determinant of the life, culture and destiny of a people. All great religions and revolutions have one. As do, all mass deceptions.

It takes a visionary to save the definition from the deception. Such paradigmatic visionaries who deliver the light to a people, have been throughout history, held in the highest esteem, either as prophets and saints or as the greatest revolutionaries. Dayanand was both – a great sage and an uncompromising revolutionary. He delivered anew, a light most ancient – that of the Vedas.

That the Vedas are, by all accounts, the most ancient scriptures known to humans is a fact widely known. Also well known is the fact that they are the supreme scriptures of the dharma that has now come to be popularly known as Hinduism, though the word 'Hindu', a later and borrowed coinage, is nowhere to be found in the scriptures or ancient texts of the faith whose proper nomenclature can only be 'Vedic'. What is not so well known however, is that the Vedas have been the subject of raging controversies, debates, gross misinterpretations, and in some cases deliberate and rather mischievous translations whose only purpose seems to be, the furtherance of the vested interests of certain classes and suppression of the masses.

At the heart of all debates, disputes and varied interpretations, is the undisputed and unrivalled status of the Vedas. The numerous sects of Hinduism, with their divergent and often conflicting beliefs and practices, largely agree only on two issues – one, that they all are theistic; and the second, that they regard the Vedas as the foremost and the final authority on all matters related to dharma. Anything found contrary to the Vedas, in the other books of Hinduism is to be rejected automatically. The Vedas define the very 'dharma' and the way of life it prescribes for the Hindus.

The debates around the Vedas have a living relevance in our times, as they have had throughout the ages. Not only is there an ongoing debate about the period of the Vedas, or whether or not they are a divine revelation, there has been much debate on issues like the following.

Which texts actually constitute the Vedas? Are they three or four or more in number? What is their purpose? Are they only intended for sacrificial rites, as suggested by the likes of Sāyaṇa or do they have a more wholesome guidance for a fulfilling and sublime way of life? Are they tedious, low, commonplace – all making up much "rubbish", as some of the European scholars like Max Müller had once declared or do they contain true knowledge of the highest order as held by Dayanand? What is their philosophy, or do they have one at all? What do they ordain?

Consider, some questions that relate to the key aspects and popular practices of the Hindu society. Do the Vedas ordain monotheism or polytheism that divides the various sects of Hinduism? Do the Vedas sanction idol worship, the most popular form of worship among the Hindus today? What about the countless rituals and rites that the common Hindu rarely understands, yet goes about performing according to the diktats of a priestly class that claims to hold the key to the shāstras? Moreover, what does the

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Vedic canon tell us about the system of caste-by-birth? And what about the status of women? Do the so-called 'shudras', the people of other lower castes and women even have the right to study the Vedas? What if polytheism and idolatry are indeed contrary to the supreme scriptures of Hindus? What then is to become of the millions of temples, the legions of gods and goddesses and the priestly class that thrives on their worship? What if, most of the rites and rituals are, in their form and essence, a gross distortion of the dharma that a devout Hindu holds more precious than his life; if the system of caste-by-birth, now so deeply entrenched in the Hindu society and psyche is non-Vedic; if women are to have all the rights denied to them despite the claims of respecting them in name of a certain Indian culture? What then is to become of the so called social-order, morals, ideals, and the 'dharma' itself?

In a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, multi-religious country like India, the debates around the Vedas assume significance not just for the Hindus, but for all others as well. We live unfortunately, in a world torn asunder by conflicts, many of which have religion, ethnicity and culture at their core. India is no exception. This great land has given birth to four of the major religions of the world and has also accepted, though not without some of the inevitable conflict and adaptation, some others as a part of its pluralistic being. In such a milieu, debates around the supreme scriptures of the dominant religion are simply unavoidable. They have far-reaching implications for our social fabric, the values and issues of politics, the principles of justice and governance, and in fact the very conception of nationhood.

With a text as ancient and complex as the Vedas, the line between truth and deception is bound to be blurred by the sands of time. Add to that the problem that words in Vedic Sanskrit carry meanings radically different from those in the 'laukika' usage or later Sanskrit, and these sands turn into a fertile ground for misinterpretations. Masses depend upon the learned for the meaning and essence of their scriptures, and when the scholars are themselves insistent upon distorting the truth or inventing falsehood in the name of revelation, the people are inevitably doomed to an abyss of ignorance, degradation and misery. Perhaps, in no other case is it more true than in the case of the Vedas and the millions who follow them. The medieval Indians scholars like Sāyaṇa on the one hand and the modern European scholars like Max Müller on the other have been guilty of numerous misinterpretations that become obvious on even a cursory scrutiny by a neutral reader. Yet these misinterpretations had come to be regarded as the very meaning of the Vedas before Dayanand arrived on the scene.

Dayanand reinterpreted the Vedas in accordance with the finest ancient traditions of scholarship and heralded a re-discovery of the Vedic dharma. His knowledge was vast; his command over the Sanskrit grammar, matchless; his insights, often awe-inspiring. His approach, spiritual; his arguments, sharp; and his postulations, indeed radical. He took the very shāstras that the orthodoxy wielded as tools of its dominance, dusted off the numerous misinterpretations, and turned them into a light that shone anew for his people.

The understanding of the Vedas would be, I suggest, incomplete, if not incorrect, without taking into account the ground-breaking work of Dayanand. One may or may not agree with Dayanand on all the issues mentioned above, but none can deny that he

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is an indispensable teacher of the Vedas, who as Aurobindo said, was 'the first discoverer of the right clues', if not the only real Vedic scholar of modern times, as his followers hold him to be.

III

They say, a thought cannot be killed. Tempting as that idea is, I beg to disagree, at least partially.

Killed, perhaps not, but a thought can certainly be distorted beyond recognition. That is the tragic fate that some seem hell-bent upon meting out to Dayanand. Defeat the man, they could not; distort his legacy, they certainly can.

Fatal deceptions come, mostly not from one's opponents but from those who claim to be one's own. I have spoken earlier of two deceptions in vogue about Dayanand – of marginalisation and pedestalisation. Both pale in comparison to a design far more sinister – that of misappropriation. A group totally opposed to Dayanand in spirit, thought and practice is attempting not so unsuccessfully, to own Dayanand, and in the process, make the masses disown his vision of dharma and India, forever. A similar misappropriation is being attempted in the case of the Vedas too. Much has always been, and is again being claimed about what the Vedas ordain and what the Vedic is. For some of the claimants as well as the critics, it is often a matter of political posturing, often found wanting in a serious investigation of facts.

How is Dayanand or any other great person to be judged? The litmus test is quite obvious and simple – the core values, principles and ideas, besides one's character and actions. I would like to re-emphasise here, the word, core. Any great person is bound to end up offering opinions and ideas on a wide range of subjects. So did Dayanand. One may not agree with him on all issues, but does that become valid ground for rejecting his core ideas? Should we judge him or her on ideas quite peripheral to the core area of his or her specialisation? Yes and no! No, if the matter is of no major relevance to the core area of work and expertise, or the topic is only of casual importance; and yes, if it reveals a major flaw in one's character, actions or conception of human values. Would I, for example judge a genius from the field of science for his ideas on sports? No, if the scientist's opinion lies in his or her preference for a certain game or a sports-person; and certainly yes, if the opinion reveals a major flaw in character, actions, and values – if it smacks, for example of racism.

And how do we decide who are the rightful claimants of someone's legacy? Again the same simple test applies - 'the core values, principles and ideas, besides the character and actions.' The same should apply to Dayanand and his claimants. As the senior editor of this volume, Ram Prakash says, "Swami Dayanand Saraswati was a global citizen. While his field of work was limited to his motherland, India; his vision was not, as it was for all humanity." Dayanand's area of philosophical as well as practical work covered many domains. Hence, anyone working in any field of Indian life is likely to pick up, or be influenced by, something or the other from his ideas and work. But that does not make a person or a group the rightful claimant of his legacy, even if it is so claimed from the rooftops. Ironically, many of those who hold the very non-Vedic

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beliefs that Dayanand vehemently opposed and died fighting against, now claim his name and the Vedas. And no one bothers to check what the truth is – neither do the claimants speak of it, nor do the critics attempt to find out.

Truth, can often be inconvenient!

Inconvenient it is, for Truth challenges! It challenges one to change – change one's beliefs, and actions; and change can be far more difficult than sacrifice. Dayanand had that courage. The courage to change – the courage to question oneself before questioning others. He, a caste-brahman, uprooted the very scriptural basis of the inherently inhumane system of caste-by-birth; a shaivite, he went on to denounce idolatry; a sannyāsī, whose only material wealth comprised the books of grammar and theology that he had painstakingly collected over years, and yet cast away into the waters of Yamuna at his future guru's directive; a sādhu whose 'sadhukkaḍī' style of speech could sometimes be scathing, but who, before criticising the other faiths, vehemently criticised the ills, decadent practices and rituals of his own religion. Disagree, criticise or admire Dayanand, but be neutral or claim him with caution. Most certainly 'own' him if you can, but remember that the claim requires a courage, most fierce yet sublime.

What are some of the key points that one can learn about Dayanand and the Vedas? About the 'core' values, principle and ideas about one of the great makers of modern India; and about the most ancient of texts, whose wisdom and awe-inspiring poetic beauty is the treasure, not just of Hindus and India but of all humanity? How are we to judge what is 'Vedic'; what is Dayanand's vision, and who are its true followers or admirers? Here is what the collective wisdom of the learned scholars of this volume, points towards:

Firstly, about the Vedas, their importance and Vedic literature:

(1) Most sects, scholars and texts of Hinduism, despite their numerous differences, hold that the Vedas are self-authenticated and the final authority on all matters related to the 'Vedic Dharma' (or Hinduism, as it is now known.) Therefore, anything found contradictory to the Vedas is to be automatically rejected in any other grantha. (*Chapter 3, Raghuvir Vedalankar; Chapter 20, Ram Prakash;Chapter 25, Ranvir Singh*). The importance of this fact can hardly be overemphasised. This supreme status of the Vedas as the final authority of Hinduism is at the heart of all attempts to misinterpret, misrepresent and misappropriate the Vedas.

(2) The Vedas are four in number; no more, no less. Ṛg, Yajur, Sāma, Atharva – all the four Vedas are of equal importance. No Brāhmaṇa granthas, Upaniṣads or any other texts are to be regarded as the Vedas, as has been suggested by some. (*Chapters 3, 20, 25*)

(3) Furthermore, Swami Virjanand Dandi, the guru of Swami Dayanand Saraswati, made a key differentiation between the ārṣa and the anārṣa granthas. The former are acceptable, but only to the extent that they are in accordance with the Vedas, while the latter are to be rejected completely. This was to become one of the central principles of Dayanand's approach and work. (*Chapter 9, Ram Prakash*) The ārṣa granthas are the ones authored by the Vedic seers or rishis, while the anārṣa granthas are the ones written by people devoid of Vedic knowledge, for their vested interests. (*Chapter 29, Vedpal*) The ārṣa granthas

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include the Upaniṣads, the Āraṇyaka literature, the six Vedāṅgas, Brāhmaṇas of the Vedas and Anukramaṇis etc. Here, the word Brāhmaṇa stands for some texts and is not be confused with the similar sounding name of a caste. (*Chapter 30, O.P. Pandey*). The anārṣa granthas include the Purāṇas and some other so-called shāstras, which have come to acquire much currency among the Hindus, but are essentially non-Vedic and are therefore, to be rejected.

(4) Despite the supreme importance of the Vedas for the Vedic Dharma or Hinduism, the followers of Dayanand hold that it is not even a Hindu scripture, as its knowledge is for all humanity. As Tulsi Ram, the learned English translator of the Vedas, declares, "It is for anyone whosoever cares to seek and know. It is called a Hindu scripture only because the people, now known as Hindu over the course of history, subscribe to it. Everyone has a right to the Veda as his/her own heritage." (*Chapter 22, Tulsi Ram*). Hence, any attempts to 'own' the Vedas and hold them against others, can never be in the right spirit.

Secondly, a few points about the interpretations of the Vedas:

(5) It must be pointed out that interpretation of the Vedas is not a matter of one's whims and fancies. It must adhere to some strict rules. Any misinterpretation, deliberate or otherwise, can easily be pointed out and countered. Vedic interpretation requires, among other things, the following: (a) A proper knowledge of Sanskrit grammar and its indisputable laws as laid down by the likes of Pāṇini, Patañjali and Yāska, (b) Vedic Sanskrit being quite different from later Sanskrit, the Vedic words ought to be treated as yaugika and yoga-rūrhi and not as rūrha, i.e., all words are to be derived from verbal roots and are not to be taken as per their meanings in later usage, (c) The application of aids like the six Vedic limbs, the Vedāṅgas and the six Upāṅgas etc., (d) consistency in approach and technique, and (e) philosophical consistency in interpretation.

(6) As mentioned above, Vedic Sanskrit is quite different from later Sanskrit. Till the time it was commonly understood, there was no need for any bhāṣya or commentary of the Vedas or other support literature. Later, many such texts were authored to facilitate the correct understanding of the Vedas. Over time, there came to be many traditions of Vedic interpretations or bhāṣya, each with a different approach or focus. The three major schools were – The Yajñika school, the Aitihāsika school, and the Nairukta school. Some other minor systems that existed in the ancient times, include – the Parivrājika school, the Naidāna school and the Vaiyākarṇa school. (*Chapter 23, Satish Prakash and Surendra Kumar*) The major methods of interpretation in vogue may be usefully categorised as the Mythological method, the Antiquarian or the Historical method and the Contemporary method. (*Chapter 21, Guru Datta Vidyarthi*)

(7) The list of Vedic interpretors is long. (*Chapter 23*) However, much mischief was done in the name of interpretation and the meaning of Veda mantras distorted and arbitrarily applied by the medieval scholars like Sāyaṇa, Mahīdhara, Rāvaṇa and Uvvaṭa. They sanctioned many non-Vedic rituals and practices in the name of the Vedas and yajña, which not only clouded the true Vedic knowledge, but

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also furthered the interests of the priestly class and pushed the Indian society deeper into the depths of darkness. (*Chapters21, 22*)

(8) The incorrect and often mischievous interpretations by the mediaeval Indian pandits became the basis of some famous translations of the Vedas by the European scholars like Max Müller, as many of them have themselves acknowledged. No wonder, their translations are far from truth. Any neutral reader can check out for oneself how amusing and often quite ridiculous their interpretations are, when compared with the correct expositions by looking at a few examples. (*Chapters21,22*) Many of these scholars and their 'masters' held a contemptuous view of the ancient Indian thought and treatises including the Vedas. They dubbed the Vedas and other Indian philosophical literature as the ideas 'of barbarians', products of 'a lesser mind', and simply 'rubbish'. Yet unfortunately, the faulty translations by the Indians like Sāyaṇa and those by the Europeans, continue to be popular and remain the source of much confusion about the Vedas.

(9) There was a design behind some of these translations that not many are aware of. Max Müller was impressed upon, to translate the Vedas into English, by Lord Macaulay who opined, "A single shelf of a good European library is worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia." Max Müller initially refused but was later successfully tempted by Macaulay, whose aim was to run down the ancient Indian scriptures and the self-esteem of the Indians, thus strengthening the colonial rule, and perhaps paving the way for large scale conversions. In 1868, Max Müller wrote to his wife, "Veda is the root of their religion and to show them what that root is, I feel sure, is the only way of uprooting all that has been sprung from it during the last three thousand years." It is not for me to suggest what he hoped to establish, once the 'uprooting' was achieved. That may however be clarified by Macaulay himself, who in 1835, wrote in his 'Minute on Education', "We must do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, opinions, in morals, and in intellect."(*Chapter 22*)

Let me make it absolutely clear that my intention here is not to even implicitly run down any religion or to raise a flag for another. Far from it! On the contrary, I only wish to point out how the rulers and scholars often connive to use the scriptures to beguile the masses in the name of religion. What Müller and Macaulay did was nothing new, as some religious conspiracy-theorists may be eager to conclude. Centuries earlier, the Indian scholars like Sāyaṇa (who was the prime-minister in a king's court) had done the same; as had the King and pandits of Kashi conspired later, against the truth and Dayanand. Who is to tell that history will not be repeated yet again in the future! It is most ironical that some who claim to oppose Macaulay's approach and propose one more 'Vedic' instead, fall prey themselves to the 'Sāyaṇa/ Max Müller type misinterpretations' of the Vedas, and indulge in practices totally opposed to the Vedic Dharma.

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(10) Swami Dayanand Saraswati was the first scholar, who after centuries, challenged and demolished the flawed interpretations by the Indian exegetes like Sāyaṇa and Mahīdhara as well as those by the foreign commentators like Max Müller, Monier Williams and Wilson, that had come to distort the very nature and content of the Vedas. (*Chapter 20)* Dayanand, with the vision of a true seer, reinterpreted the Vedas and revealed the profound meanings of the mantras on the basis of indisputable laws of Sanskrit grammar, correctly treating the Vedic words as yaugika and yoga-rūrhi and not as rūrh, (*Chapter 24, Surya Devi Chaturveda, Chapter 25*) and through the brilliant use of the Vedāṅgas etc. (*Chapter 26, Gyan Prakash Shastri; Chapter 27, Mahavir Agrawal*) Dayanand elaborated upon the approach, rules and method of his exegesis in his magnum opus Ṛgvedādibhāṣyabhūmikā. (*Chapters3, 25*) He could only complete the interpretation of the Yajurveda and a portion of the Ṛgveda in his life-time and the task was completed by Arya Samajist scholars, according to the rules and the approach elucidated by him. (*Chapter 10, Prachetas*) So convincing was Dayanand's Vedic exegesis that none of the famous pandits could ever establish a single flaw, and the same Max Müller, who had earlier accorded the Vedas a rather low ranking among the holy books of the world, expressed interest in writing his biography.

Thirdly, here are some fundamental principles that any follower of the Vedas and Dayanand must believe in, advocate and practice:

(11) The Vedas are monotheistic. They do not uphold the concept of multiple Gods and Goddesses worshipped by the Paurāṇics. The various words, alleged to be the names of deities, are only the names and attributes of one God. (*Chapter 37, Sompal Shastri*)

(12) The Vedas do not sanction idol worship, at all. It is a non-Vedic practice that crept into Hinduism later and gained currency, also because it helped the priestly class acquire status, power, prestige and of course, a source of livelihood. (*Chapter 38, Dharmavir*). Dayanand proved time and again that idolatry is contrary to the Vedic teachings and campaigned all his life against the practice through his writings and countless shāstrāthas in which he defeated the most learned pandits of the land. (*Chapter 5, Somdev Shatanshu and Brahmadev Vidyalankar*) In fact, some kings and pandits made him many lucrative offers including that of being declared an avātar, for only giving up his opposition to idolatry, but to no avail. (*Chapter 5*)

(13) The system of caste-by-birth has no sanction of the Vedas or even that of Manusmriti. (*Chapter 36, Surender Kumar*) Dayanand vehemently criticised the caste system and all caste based discrimination like the practice of untouchability. (*Chapter 15, Kushal Dev Shastri*) He upheld the ancient system of 'varṇa', based on guṇa, karma, svabhāva (attributes, action and temperament); and accorded, not on the basis of one's birth, but by the guru upon the completion of one's education. He also argued strongly in favour of the interchangeability of varṇa or caste. It is common knowledge that the followers of Dayanand reject casteism totally, to the extent of discarding the surnames that denote any caste-by-birth.

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(14) Swami Dayanand accorded the highest status to women. He advocated equal rights for them in all matters, toiled for their emancipation and for the eradication of ills like child-marriage and sati system, and fought for the right of widows to remarry etc. (*Chapter 16, Sneh Mahajan*)

(15) For centuries, the Shudras and women had been denied many of the religious, social and basic human rights. Swami Dayanand proclaimed all rights for them including the right to education and study of the Vedas. Imagine this - the priestly class considered even the shadow of the Shudras as impure and here was Dayanand placing the supreme scriptures of the dharma in their very hands!

(16) The Vedas do not sanction animal slaughter. (*Chapter 22*) The yajñas, or the noble duties of the Aryas, even in their ritualistic aspects have no place for practices like human or animal sacrifice, meat-eating or the consumption of liquor etc. (*Chapter 42, Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya; Chapter 29*)

(17) Jyotiṣa is one the six Vedāṅgas or limbs of the Vedas, aimed at facilitating the proper understanding of the mantras. (*Chapter 26*) Importantly, the Vedic concept of Jyotiṣa is that of astronomy and not astrology. Dayanand and his followers believe in Jyotiṣa only as 'gaṇit' or astronomical calculations and not as 'phalit'or prediction of one's future etc. (*Chapter 41, Darshaney Lokesh*) Any rituals or practices related to astrological predictions or the supposed pacification of the heavenly bodies are non-Vedic and unacceptable to the Dayanandis.

(18) There are only sixteen sanskārs or rituals to be followed by the Aryas from conception to death. Contrary to what the priestly class would have the masses believe, according to the Vedic way of life, no rituals like tarpaṇa or shrāddha etc., are to be performed after the last rites. (*Chapter 43, Jwalant Kumar*)

Any claims about what the Vedas actually ordain, what Dayanand truly stands for, and about the protection of the Vedic Dharma, can be easily tested on the basis of the points mentioned above. Suffice it to say that anyone who believes in the Purāṇas, idol worship, sacrifice of any life-form in the rituals, and the system of caste-by-birth or any other form of discrimination, cannot be the rightful claimant of Dayanand's legacy or be an enlightened follower of the Vedas.

## IV

The fifty articles that comprise this volume have been divided into seven sections, each of which can be read usefully by itself, by those interested in a particular domain. Hence, some sections carry articles that overlap somewhat with those in the other sections. Each article however, carries the unique voice of its author and provides a distinct piece of the overall picture.

Some of the articles have been drawn from the works of luminaries of the Indian freedom struggle and the social awakening that preceded and accompanied it. Among them, are the articles by the revolutionary-turned-ascetic Sri Aurobindo; the towering fire-brand leader of the Indian freedom struggle, Lala Lajpat Rai; the famous

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revolutionary and poet Ram Prasad Bismil, whose piece shared here is from the autobiography that he penned in jail while waiting for the gallows; and Sardar Kultar Singh, the younger brother of Bismil's compatriot Shaheed Bhagat Singh, who remains to this date, a living inspiration to millions of Indians. The volume has been further enriched by the writings of some others who are no more in their mortal frames. These include the brilliant Guru Datta Vidyarthi, in whom Dayanand saw on his death-bed, the future torch-bearer of his mission, and whose own untimely demise at the age of twenty-six was an irreparable loss to scholarly Vedic work. Also included are the articles culled by the editors from the works of reputed Vedic scholars, Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya and Swami Jagdishwaranand Saraswati. The other esteemed contributors and translators include the most respected living Arya scholars, the promising voices of the Arya Samaj, and those who have devoted their lives to its cause and ideals. The volume acquires a unique dimension, graciously lent to it by the learned non-Arya-Samajist scholars, the esteemed experts and practitioners of other faiths, whose articles comprise the last section.

In their totality, the seven sections tie together, the multiple strands of an intense investigation.

The first two relatively shorter sections are aimed at introducing the reader to two journeys: one, of Dayanand; and the other, of the organisation that sought to carry his mission forward. The first section looks at Dayanand – the man, his philosophy, his distinctive Vedic opinions and his journey in the quest of truth. It also presents information about his varied and voluminous writings and his famous shāstrāthas which make for some landmark religious debates of modern times. The second section traces the journey of the Arya Samaj - its context, spread, impact, missionaries and important scholars. It is also useful in understanding the uplifting impact of the Arya Samaj on the lives of Indians who migrated or were taken as indentured labour to foreign lands, and its role in the socio-political life of those countries.

Each of the next four sections could have made for a little book by itself. The third section would be especially of interest to those who seek to understand the mid-nineteenth and twentieth century Indian renaissance, the quest for a national identity and the struggle for freedom not just from the colonial rule but also from the numerous ills that plagued the Indian society. It sketches the role and contribution of Dayanand and the Arya Samaj in diverse fields like the struggle for swaraj and its revolutionary movement, the uplift of Dalits, women's emancipation, the rejection of religious dogma and superstitions, and an educational vision for a new India. It also sheds light on Dayanand's efforts for the promotion of Hindi and his influence on its literature, praised in the highest terms by legendary litterateurs like Bharatendu, Premchand, Nirala and Dinkar. The section has benefited from the contribution and feedback of senior historian K.C. Yadav; been flavoured with accounts by the almost encyclopaedic history teller of the Arya Samaj, Rajendra Jigyasu; elevated by the accounts and words of those like Bismil who made history themselves; and enriched by other learned scholars. Not only do the articles of this section comprise a complete book by themselves, each of these could and perhaps should be the seed of one.

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The fourth section addresses the issue of Vedic interpretation and its methods, around which all debates about the Vedas revolve. Highly technical in its nature, it is the pivot of all discussions and ideas that come in the sections before and after it. It begins with an introduction to the Vedas by the senior editor of this volume. This is followed by two articles, indispensable to anyone interested in the interpretation of the Vedas – one by Guru Datta, whose brilliance I have hinted at earlier, and the other by Tulsi Ram whose translation of the four Vedas into English, should be I confidently say, held above the translations by some highly acclaimed Europeans. The fourth article of the section bridges related themes as it speaks of the techniques of interpretation as well as Dayanand's work in this field. The next four articles afford invaluable insights about Dayanand as a Vedic exegete par excellence, and the tools and methods of Veda bhāṣya. The last two articles of the section help dispel some misconceptions about the Atharvaveda and Yajña.

The fifth section sheds light on important scriptures of the Vedic canon including the Upaniṣads, Ṣaḍdarśana and other shāstras. The first article provides an overview of Vedic literature, while the next two focus on the Upaniṣads and their expositions. Various sects have argued for centuries, about philosophical conceptions like Dvaita, Advaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita etc., which rely heavily on interpretations of the Ṣaḍdarśana or the six Vedic philosophies. The two articles by Swami Jagdishwaranad on the subject are a must read. The penultimate article of the section compares the views of Shankarāchārya and Dayanand on Vedānta. The Indian society remains embattled with itself on issues related to the system of caste-by-birth. The proponents as well as most opponents of the 'caste', hold Manusmriti responsible for the system. But is it really? The last article of the section, investigates.

Indians often suggest that the word 'religion' is a poor substitute for the concept of 'dharma' – which as they hold, is in fact a way of life. Hence, the importance of the sixth section cannot be overemphasised, as it focuses on issues fundamental to the Vedic belief system and the way of life. The topics include monotheism, idolatry, Traitavāda, rebirth and karma-consequence. Countless Hindus turn every now and then, to the astrologers for the prediction of their future and for ways to avert bad fate. The article by Darshaney Lokesh is an eye opener on the subject of Jyotiṣa and Pañchāṅga, the system of Indian calendars. The next two articles relate to mahāyajñas or the great duties and sanskārs or the rituals of the Aryas. The last article of the penultimate section, which in fact is also the last by an Arya Samajist scholar, focuses on Yoga, whose true nature is mostly misunderstood, despite its global popularity. The article provides a holistic understanding of the essence and practice of Yoga, the Vedic approach to leading one's life in relation to the self, others, spirituality and God.

The last section is of special importance, as it attempts to see Dayanand and the Arya Samaj from the perspective of the non-Arya-Samajists. It carries six articles by scholars of other faiths. Four of these were written or revised by the authors especially for this volume, while the other two are drawn from the works of late scholars. The first piece is a combination of two articles by Sri Aurobindo, who represents the enlightened stream of non-Arya-Samajist Vedic spiritualists. The other pieces are by the foremost scholars of Jainism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Islam and Christianity.

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Why have the editors chosen to conclude with this section, one may ask. By inviting 'the learned' of other faiths to present their opinion on or criticism of Dayanand and the Arya Samaj, we hope, not to end on a declarative note, but to further a dialogue that can only be beneficial to all.

No other country can boast of a tradition of religious disputations as well established and respected as the one in India. The practice of shāstrāthas is a time honoured tradition with strict rules and ethics, aimed at establishing the truth. For centuries, scholars of various faiths have engaged in famous shāstrāthas and authored countless treatises of 'khaṇḍana-maṇḍana', arguing their points of view, though sometimes in sharp words. Some modern writers drub this tradition as bitter bickering of the quarrelsome religious folk. I suggest that even the occasionally sharp language ought to be seen in the light of the motive. Here is a country that believes in debate and dialogue, and not in violence and suppression; a land that points towards the path of knowledge and not blind faith; a people, who hold in esteem, not the demolition of the other, but an enlightened engagement with the other, for in essence, to a spiritual person, there is no 'other'. Here is a culture among whose core values is a belief – in the triumph, not of a person, but of Truth.

Debate by its very nature is a dialogue, not a declaration; a transaction, not an imposition; a dialectics, not a disruption. To Dayanand, debate was not the means to personal ends, but a quest for truth. It is in the very spirit of Dayanand and this land to have a dialogue. I cannot help but borrow from the opening article of this volume, a quote about Dayanand by his passionate biographer Devendranath Mukhopadhyaya, "The seekers of truth possess in them an urge for it... They are lovers of natural truth and not that of its image or reflection. Artificially created truth does not satisfy them internally as they wish to achieve composite truth and that too in all simplicity." To my mind, the key term there is, 'composite truth... in all simplicity'. Oh! How glorious an ideal!

## V

Finally, let me share with you, the need which inspired this volume, the process that led to its realisation, and the hope that accompanies it.

The main aim of the editors was to produce a volume that could serve the dual purpose of acting as a reference-book for the serious researcher and an informative read for the lay reader. Effort was made to render the articles as substantive, focused and lucid as possible. Adulatory expressions were kept to a minimum and emphasis laid on facts. Most references and quotations were checked with original sources. Drastic structural changes were made to certain articles to maintain focus and to enhance the coherence of the texts. An attempt was also made to minimise the overlap across articles, but not at the cost of impeding the flow and structure of arguments. It is satisfying that the editorial changes have met with the approval of the authors. The temptation to render uniformity and greater ease to the language was mostly resisted, as not only would that have coloured the unique voice of an author, it could have also distorted the intended philosophical meaning. No changes were made to the articles in the last

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section as the editors did not wish to even inadvertently tamper with the views of the scholars of other faiths. However, references and notes were added at some places to contextualise the content.

Many of the articles were originally written in Hindi, and their translation posed a unique challenge, not only linguistic but also philosophical in nature. Consider, just one example. As mentioned earlier, the concept of Jyotiṣa in Vedic thought is that of astronomy. Most translators and the dictionaries that aid them would render the word into English as astrology, a simple error that could make an entire article rather useless. To meet the demands of translation of certain articles with any degree of success, one had to be fully conversant with Sanskrit, Hindi and English (and in one case, Arabic) besides a deep understanding of the philosophical nuances. However, there was a real dearth of competent translators with a background of Sanskrit and Vedic literature, who could remain true to the original thought without falling back on the language coined for such translations by the Paurāṇics. Moreover, many of the learned Sanskrit scholars expressed their inability to check the translations of their articles, due to a lack of facility with English. The translation was therefore an exacting task, accomplished through the meticulous efforts of scholarly translators whose contribution is no less than that of the authors. Understandably, the translations are not always quite literal, but remain true to the original in spirit and in their philosophical approach. We have further compared the translations line by line with the original articles in many cases and made corrections, as required. The process has benefited immensely from the feedback of senior scholars.

In Sanskrit, a mispronunciation, and in fact mere incorrect intonation, can lead to a misinterpretation of the Veda mantras. However, the Roman script does not lend itself easily to the accurate pronunciation of Sanskrit words. The method of circumventing this problem with the strict use of the diacritics and italics is well-established in academic writing. Its overuse however, can often be a challenge in itself for the uninitiated. Moreover, the non-diacritic spellings of many Sanskrit words and names have become popular and hence the texts already complex due to their philosophical nuances can become quite cumbersome due to the strict use of diacritics. For the editors, it was a tight rope-walk between pleasing the purist and easing matters for the lay reader. No solution can be perfect and we are indeed guilty of devising our own imperfect method. Most Sanskrit terms and all mantras have been given in both Devanagari and Roman scripts. Diacritics have been used strictly in the transliteration of Veda mantras, but applied selectively for personal and geographical names, books and terms. They have been usually applied in the case of pre-nineteenth century figures, Sanskrit books and words, while the commonly used spellings have been adopted for nineteenth and twentieth century names. In case of the latter, the use of letter 'a' at the end of proper nouns has been mostly avoided. In this respect, we have been guided by the experience that Kurukshetra is often mispronounced by many as Kurukshetrā and Rāma as Rāmā, ignoring the fact that in Hindi and Sanskrit vyaṇjana (consonant) can only be pronounced with help of a svara (vowel). However, at certain places it becomes a compelling necessity to differentiate between a and ā. Wherever felt necessary, ā, ī and ū have been used to help the reader correctly pronounce the words. Further, sh is

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used both for palatal and cerebral sibilants in the running text. While transliterating Sanskrit words, dots under the cerebral consonants ṭa, ṭha, ḍa, ḍha, ṇa, ṛ, ṣ and under the final letters ḥ and ṃ have been used. A departure from common spellings has also been made in rare cases as in the use of 'Brahman' instead of Brahmin to denote the caste. Further, in some cases, the words italicised in one article have been kept in the regular format elsewhere, depending upon the contextual importance of the term and the frequency of italics.

We hope that this volume, with all its limitations, will be able to achieve a few objectives. Firstly, this will volume will hopefully address the long-felt need for a publication in English that could provide at one place, well-documented information about various aspects of the Vedas, the Arya Samaj and Swami Dayanand Saraswati; and will serve as an authentic resource for the serious scholar and the interested lay reader alike. Secondly, we hope that it will lead to a much needed comprehensive and fair assessment of Swami Dayanand's life, philosophy, legacy and his place in the annals of Indian history. Thirdly, it would be most satisfying if the various themes covered in this book stimulate and enable further explorations by scholars in different domains. While much has been written on subjects like the uplift of Dalits and women's emancipation etc., further work in the context of recent debates and issues, is still warranted. Fourthly, we hope that this will inspire new voices among the Arya scholars to undertake in-depth scholastic work and to carry forward the tradition of their predecessors who devoted their lives to the cause of Vedic knowledge and its spread. And last but not the least, this volume will hopefully lead to serious discussions and the furtherance of a dialogue, not only among the scholars of the Vedas and of other faiths, but among the society at large.

As I lay down my pen, I have the honour of presenting to you, esteemed reader, the collective voice of over fifty scholars, and the silence of the editors' chisel. May the music of the former and the meter of the latter, add and be added to by the movements of your insights upon them.

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# SECTION I

# Swami Dayanand Saraswati: Life, Philosophy and Legacy

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# CHAPTER 1

# Dayanand's Journey: From a Seeker to a Sage

*R.K. Chauhan*

When Dayanand entered the field, there were many sects and religions in the Indian society, viz., Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Christianity and Islam. The Hindu society was further fragmented into Shaivites, Vaishnavites, Shaktas and others. Each sect was propagating its own ideas, and there was no unity. The identity of Samhitās and *ārṣa* literature and their essence, capable of purifying the human soul, was buried deep under the dark layers of ignorance, eclipsed by blind faith.[1] The so-called scholars merely used the names of these treatises to pose as erudite and great intellectuals. The traditional rituals were the monopoly and source of income of the Karmakāṇḍī Brahmans, besides giving them a social status. In the age of lack of education and enlightenment, the word of the Brahmans was regarded as the divine word (*Brahmavākya*).[2] It can be safely said that Indians were enslaved politically by the British and socially and religiously dominated by the Brahmans. The Brahmans were the custodians of this life as well as the life hereinafter. Devoid of any knowledge of the scriptures, they were completely rudderless. They were completely off the mark although they boasted of possessing the keys to the doors leading to the Supreme Power and the ultimate aim of human life, the *mokṣa*. In the absence of any sense of direction, the foreigners and people from other religions ridiculed us and indulged in mud-slinging. They described us as yokels, uncouth and the descendants of sorcerers and snake-charmers. In sheer embarrassment and with a sense of inferiority, we were getting further into mire.

Moving away from the monotheistic Vedas and the *ārṣa* literature, perpetrators of different sects claimed the superiority of their faiths and thus in the name of the sages, many religions were floated. *Yajña* as envisaged in Vedic literature was distorted and irrelevant rituals were prevalent,[3] duping the unsuspecting Vedic followers. Foreign

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invasions, loot, cruel killings, and internal strife had become symptomatic of the outside domination. Consequently Vedic knowledge and culture was wiped out. Having lost its self esteem, the Indian society had become an object of self-pity, poverty and ignorance. The owner of a golden past, and custodian of ancient culture, Aryavarta had become enslaved and pitiable.

It was at this juncture that Mool Shankar (Dayanand) was born in 1824[4] at Tankara in Morvi State of Gujarat. His father Karshanji Lalji Tiwari was an Audichya Brahman, and a rich farmer who also held the title of Jamadar. He was bent upon imparting the family traditions and Shaivism to his elder son Mool Shankar from the very beginning of his life. Therefore in his fifth year, he was initiated into Devanagari in the family tradition, and was made to commit to memory several shlokas and sūtras of Dharma shāstras. When he was of eight years, Yajñopavīta sanskār was performed and Gāyatrī, Sandhyā and Yajurveda Samhitā beginning with *Rudra Adhyāya* were taught to him. Since the father was a Shaivite, it followed that he was schooled in that and Shiva worship was the done thing. Despite the reluctance of his affectionate mother[5], the father persistently encouraged the son to participate in Shiva pūjā with an empty stomach as per the family tradition. He would take Mool Shankar to temples and religious meetings in the belief that Shiva worship was supreme. "Swami Dayanand thus had the advantage of inheriting a strong will from his father and a benevolent mind from his mother."

The family plays a vital role in the personality development of an individual. It was but natural for this to happen in the life of Mool Shankar. In his fourteenth year, a queer incident on Shivaratri has been thus described in the autobiography of Swami Dayanand:

> When Shivaratri came, I was taught the importance of the occasion on the 13th day of the moon and was also made to resolve to fast on the next day. My mother intervened to say that he would not be able to fast, but my father had his way and made me fast. On the evening of 14th *Chaturdashi* many aristocrats of the colony along with their sons went to the temple for the vigil, I too went there with my father. After the first two *praharas,* I saw that the Pujaris (the priests) and some devotees had left the temple and lay asleep outside it. I had heard that by sleeping on that particular night, one does not get the rewards of the Shivaratri fast. I tried to keep awake by dousing my eyes with water. Then everybody including my father went off to sleep leaving me to watch alone, a miracle which happened just then: A mouse came out of its hide-out and began to wander around the idol of Shiva. Not only that, it even climbed onto the idol and ate away the *akshata* (offerings) too. A doubt arose in my mind that was this the same Mahadev whose legend I had heard or someone else. Because he is a god like human beings, he rides a bullock, walks around, eats, keeps a *trishool* in his hand, plays a *damroo,* blesses and curses and owns Kailash. Such were the Mahadev's stories. I then woke up my father and enquired, 'Is this the Mahadev of the tales or any other?' Father enquired as to why I was asking. I then said that the why does the Mahadev of the story, if awake, let a mouse run over him.

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> He then said that the Mahadev who lives at Kailash is invoked and worshipped. In *Kaliyuga* it is not possible. Therefore an idol is made. Mahadev is invoked which pleases the Mahadev at Kailash. Hearing this, a doubt was created in my mind. I was very hungry also. I asked for my father's permission to go home. He said you take the guard with you, but do not eat under any circumstances. When I reached home, I told my mother that I was very hungry. Mother gave me sweets, after eating which I went off to sleep. In the morning when father came to know about it, he was very angry and said that I had done a very bad thing. Then I replied that he was not the Mahadev of the story and I do not see any reason why I should worship him. I had no devotion in my mind, but I told my father that I get little time from my studies to perform rituals. My mother and uncle talked to my father and he calmed down, thinking that it was a good thing to leave me to my studies. Then I decided to read the classics Nighaṇṭu, Nirukta, Pūrva Mīmāmsā and learn about the rituals.[6]

It is obvious that because of his father's sustained efforts, Mool Shankar with his pure heart and unquestioned faith in his parents, had already formed Shiva's image in his mind. Despite this, a doubt arose in his mind after seeing the antics of a mouse on the idol of Mahadev and since his father could not clear his doubts, Mool Shankar lost faith in Shiva's idol. Consequently, even the fear of a strict and diehard Shiva devotee father could not stop him from ending his fast.

Mool Shankar continued with his study of the shāstras in the belief that the pursuit could help him solve the issue of knowing the real Shiva. The doubt that arose created such a curiosity in the child's mind that he could not rest till he had found an answer to the question. It became the aim of his life to know the real Shiva. According to Devendranath Mukhopadhyaya,

> The seekers of truth possess in them an urge for it. In that capacity they attain very high pedestals of human race. They are lovers of natural truth and not that of its image or reflection. Artificially created truth does not satisfy them internally as they wish to achieve composite truth and that too in all simplicity. Thus... he (Mool Shankar) vowed that he won't worship idol for the real Mahadev.[7]

Mool Shankar could not lay to rest, the doubt that arose on Shivaratri. His desire to know the real Shiva grew more powerful with every passing day. His restless mind got no answers from relatives, friends or the learned people. In the contemporary atmosphere, it was but natural to find an alternative in *Shāstra Jñāna* and *Yoga-Sādhanā*. Hence, Mool Shankar proceeded ahead on the unknown journey of life adopting the tools like learning shāstras, self-introspection and observance of celibacy to shape his future course. While he was pursuing the unknown path of life, two tragic events took place in the family – the sudden death of his younger sister due to cholera, followed, a few years later, by the demise of his erudite, affectionate and sincere uncle. The two deaths shook

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up the sensitive young Mool Shankar, causing deep anguish and impacting his soul in a way that changed the direction of his life. In his own words:

> I had a younger sister of fourteen years who got cholera; *Vaids* were called, who medicated her but she succumbed to the disease in just four hours. Everyone started crying, but it gave me a sudden shock and created fear in my mind that I would also die similarly. That set me thinking. At this rate all the living beings in the world would die. Something should be done so that there is no suffering and deliverance is attained. It was at this juncture that I became inclined to renunciation. But I kept the thought to myself and did not divulge it to anyone. I had a very affectionate and learned uncle (father's younger brother) who passed away when I was of nineteen years. His death caused me deep shock and I felt there was nothing in this world. I did not say anything to my family, but, I told my friends that I do not want to get into worldly life. They told this to my parents. My parents felt that I should be married off quickly.[8]

While the deaths of his uncle and sister filled his mind with anguish, they simultaneously raised in him, a curiosity regarding life and death. Such questions often arise in people's minds, but only in the case of a few, they became a deep conviction and change the course of their lives. Mool Shankar was one of the few, and this led him to renunciation.

As per the available resources and facilities, Mool Shankar's studies continued. Sensing his inclination towards renunciation and a very inquisitive mind, the parents declined to send him for higher studies to Kashi – the centre of Hindu faith and learning, and made a futile attempt to tie him in married life. The love of his mother, the discipline of his father, the comforts of home or the attraction of a householder's life, the fear of unknown future – nothing could deter the detached young man. At the age of twenty-two, the young Mool Shankar, one night, bade farewell to his parental home. He set out in the search of truth on an eternal path. His objectives were clear and his resolve, firm – to seek the real Shiva, to conquer death and to attain salvation. He made *Yoga Sādhanā* and celibacy his weapons, and his search for classical knowledge led him to the spiritual people.

After leaving home, he gave away the symbols of prosperity – jewellery and expensive clothes. Ceremoniously, he took benediction from a *Naiṣṭhika Brahmachārī,* wore a Safforn robe and took on the name of Shuddha Chaitanya. Though his father forcibly brought him home from the fair at Sidhpur; mere three days later he left home again and forever. He studied Vedānta shāstras, Vedāntasāra and Paribhāshya under Swami Parmanand Paramahansa at Chanod Karnali and for some time he remained a protagonist of *Advaita.* Brahmachārī Shuddha Chaitanya took Sannyāsa from Swami Purnanand Saraswati at the age of twenty-three and was rechristened as Swami Dayanand Saraswati. After that, first at Chanod Karnali and later on at Dudheshwar temple of Ahmedabad, he acquired expertise in Yoga from Jwalanand Puri and Shivanand Giri.[9] Consequently, he gained physical and mental strength and firmness of soul. His resolve to attain his objective grew stronger. Thereafter, he practised yoga at

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Mount Abu and went towards what is today known as Uttarakhand. During the Kumbh Mela at Haridwar, he practised yoga in the forests of Chandi (Haridwar) and then at Rishikesh.

He reached Okhi *maṭha* after travelling through various religious places, ashrams and temples in Uttarakhand. The *mahant* of the *maṭha* was much impressed with Dayanand's personality and tried to lure him with the promise of handing over the *gaddi* (seat) of the *maṭha*. Dayanand declined, saying that had he wanted such acquisitions, he would not have renounced his home, parents and dear ones. 'Can you and your establishment give me more than that? You do not have a fraction of what I have given up' he asserted. When asked about what was it that he sought, he replied that, 'I have to grow spiritually by means of truth, knowledge, yoga, salvation and purity of my soul.[10] Jordens says about Dayanand –

> His adherence to principle was of an inflexible and narrowly rationalistic type, he tended to adjudge things in terms of black and white and had little appreciation of all grey areas, the shades of meaning, the ambiguities and uncertainties that are inherent in so many spheres of human thought and ethics.[11]

The journey from Okhi *maṭha* to Badrinath was very difficult but could not deter Dayanand from his resolve. He arrived at the banks of the river Ganga via Ramgiri, Kashipur, Drona Sagar and Garhmukteshwar. He examined Tantra treatises and rejected them. Finally, he came to the conclusion that the books other than Vedas, Patañjal and Sāmkhya Shāstras, written on science and education were false and defective.[12]

Travelling through Uttar Pradesh, he came to the source of the river Narmada. On his way, he encountered dangerous wild animals but his resolve to advance to his objective did not diminish. He later wrote,

> I could see before me a huge dense forest where it was difficult to enter. There were many thorny trees of jujube which were so thick that it seemed impossible to cross them. However, later on I crawled on my belly and knees serpent-like and slowly got out of the bushes and thus I conquered the impediments and difficulties. In achieving this, I had to sacrifice my body flesh and skin. I came out wounded and half-dead. At that time, it was dark all around. Nothing was visible in the dark. But, even if the path was difficult, my resolve to go ahead was a compulsion. I was hoping that there would be a way. Therefore, I kept on advancing.[13]

This incident is symbolic of his firm resolve. Describing Dayanand as a man, Jordens said,

> Dayanand's personality was not one easily captured in a simple formula, for it had many different complementary facets. Of these the most immediate obvious

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> is that from his youth to full maturity he was a self-directed, self-sufficient, rugged individualist... He always had to discover his own way and to decide for himself what direction he would take.[14]

Nothing could deter Dayanand and he remained steadfast in his conviction. For almost fifteen years from 1845 to 1860, he faced untold difficulties but remained firm and never looked back.[15] This was a unique effort in the search of truth and endless knowledge. And it was achieved in the difficult prevailing social, religious and spiritual milieu. The committed devotee fought wilfully against difficult realities with unique courage to gain principled knowledge. It filled him with rare courage, patience, strength and deep determination which stood him in good stead in his latter life.

According to Lala Lajpat Rai – 'He went from place to place enquiring after scholars of renown, men of wisdom and ascetics (*sādhus*) of great religious merit. Whenever he came across one from whom he could learn anything, he stopped and sat at his feet. With some he studied philosophy, with others the Vedas'.[16]

During his travels, Dayanand made every attempt to reach the source of knowledge, and never hesitated to imbibe anything new which stood to reason and to reject the unreasonable already imbibed. Again in the words of Lala Lajpat Rai, 'He despised none from whom he could learn anything either in the way of book knowledge, religious insight or spiritual exercises'.[17] Arvind Sharma summarises the impact of all this as, 'Dayanand was moulded by the experiences he had, the men he met, and situations he encountered. His mental firmament, like that of any dynamic thinker, was in motion even while giving the appearance of being unchanged'.[18]

Since childhood, he was committed to understanding the depth of the Vedas, Upaniṣads and Darśana shāstras etc., which he discussed with known Acharyas and scholars during his travels. He learnt grammar at the feet of several scholars, but unfortunately could not get to the depths of the Vedas and *ārṣa* literature. Finally, on the advice of Swami Purnanand of Haridwar,[19] he decided to seek knowledge at the feet of Swami Virjanand Dandi. In November 1860, Dayanand knocked at his door at Mathura. Here, Swami Virjanand was in search of a disciple to whom he could bequeath his legacy.[20] But in the last stage of his life, handicapped by lack of resources and failing health, he found himself unable and helpless to acquaint the religious and intellectual world of his life's work. His conviction was that only Aṣṭādhyāyī and Mahābhāshya are the authentic treatises of grammar, and books other than these (Kaumudī etc.) are the creation of quacks.[21] Dandiji had started working on Nighaṇṭu and Nirukta. He was of the firm belief that these four treatises were the keys to the ultimate treasures of the Aryan race, and this was the only way to understand the Vedas.[22] The revolutionary *Prajñācakṣu* Virjanand Saraswati now divided the entire Sanskrit literature (other than the Vedas) into two broad classes – *ārṣa* and *anārṣa*. He declared that the literature of Vedic period was *ārṣa* and the post-Mahābhārata literature composed by ordinary people was *anārṣa*.[23]

Dandiji now considered only the *ārṣa* granths as authentic and the *anārṣa* as unfounded. He had deep faith in the Vedas and accepted them as self-evident like the sun. His contention was that the *anārṣa* literature was responsible for the evils in India.

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Consequently, he held that the propagation of *ārṣa* literature was essential for the emancipation of the country. Resurrection of *ārṣa* literature is indeed the singular revolutionary contribution of Dandiji.[24]

He acquainted Dayanand with the difference between *ārṣa* and *anārṣa* granthas, Aṣṭādhyāyī, Mahābhāshya, Nirukta and Nighaṇṭu, to make him understand the essence of the Vedas and those granthas which were in conformity with the Vedas[25] and that too, in just two and a half years.

In Dandiji, Dayanand had found an ideal teacher for whom Lala Lajpat Rai wrote: 'His soul was full of the purity and greatness of the past.... His vision was clear and his intellect of a very superior order'.[26] When the disciple's thirst for knowledge was satiated,[27] the guru felt gratified. Having discovered the deserving inheritor of his treasures,[28] Dandiji was delighted and Dayanand was overwhelmed with joy on the fulfilment of his heartfelt desire of getting the key (Vedic Vyākaraṇa) to the Vedas and *ārṣa* literature. It was as if he had at last got the wherewithal to get to the door of *mokṣa.*

After the teaching and learning was over, the disciple presented himself to the guru with some cloves, and waited for the blessings and guidance for the life hereinafter. The fulfilled, grateful and dedicated disciple looked intently at the guru. Satisfied with Dayanand's capability, grasp of the subject and dedication, Virjanand said,

> Son, the poor masses are suffering badly in India, go and emancipate them. A lot of undesirable malpractices have crept in because of multifarious beliefs, go and remove them and uplift the suffering humanity... Propagate *ārṣa* literature and create people's interest in it... That would be your *Guru Dakṣiṇā.* I do not need any worldly thing... Remember, literature created by ordinary men is full of criticism of the Almighty and the Rishis. But *ārṣa* literature has none of these shortcomings. This is the test of *ārṣa* and *anārṣa* literature. Never leave this touch stone.[29]

"Gurudev, I will abide by your command throughout my life." Having said so, Dayanand bowed down his head in reverence. After getting the direction and blessings of the guru, Dayanand took his leave.

Before coming to Mathura, Dayanand's ambition and objective was the search for truth through the study of Vedic literature and the attainment of *mokṣa.* But now, his aim had been altered. Now, he wanted not only to fulfil his desire to achieve the aims such as a long-cherished curiosity to realise the real Shiva; overcoming the fear of death to attain *mokṣa,* the ultimate source of *ānanda*; but also to acquire the true knowledge hidden in the Vedas and *ārṣa* granthas and to propagate the same for the benefit of the masses and the uplift of humanity. He was adorned with the capabilities of being a completely detached Sannyāsi, a confirmed celibate, a perfect Yogi[30] and a devoted disciple of the 'Sun of Vyākaraṇa' – Swami Virjanand.

The lover of truth, the seeker of bliss, a man of determination, sound in physical, mental, intellectual, emotional and spiritual health was rising gradually to the maxima on the trajectory of growth in life. The genesis of eternal and natural truth was taking place naturally and systematically. Transformation from Swami Dayanand to

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Rishi Dayanand had become evident. Gaining the penetrative ability to reach the depth of meaning, he was going to reveal the Vedic mantras in their real sense. The blessings from the guru and God overwhelmed his soul with solace and bliss. In the words of Jordens – 'His passion was not speculation but for mastery of technique that would bring spiritual fulfilment... his assiduous practices of yoga made him into a man of astounding physical and mental power'.[31]

He had been guided, inspired and trained by a unique Guru – a grand old man, deprived of visual capability, thin and frail in physique but one, who aspired intensely to transform the culturally derailed Indian society. His intellect and memory of extraordinary high order, rare scholarship in Vedic grammar and scriptural knowledge brought him name and fame as a well-versed teacher. His strong will to induct his 'self' into an able and deserving pupil for fulfilment of his long cherished desire had now materialised by fielding Dayanand to fight the battle that lay ahead. It was an unparalleled example in Indian history of handing over the baton to crusade against untruth spread all around. Both, the giver and the receiver, were distinct in their forms and frames but in tune to achieve the final common goal. The crusader Dayanand has been described by Harbilas Sarda as:

A frame of adamant, a soul of fire,
No dangers fright him, no labours tire.[32]

After leaving the guru *kuṭiyā*, Dayanand entered the arena of an active life that was to define his legacy, and he spent about seven years in the areas in and around Agra, Jaipur and Kashi. It was a new field, a new experience. The first two years at Agra were spent in self-study and researching the shāstras. Subsequently, he spent time in studying and contemplating Yoga-related shāstras[33] as well as in conversations with the scholars and the heads of the prevalent sects.[34] He travelled along the Ganges to religious and historical places. He rejected idol worship, Bhāgavata and other Purāṇas as well as practices like *Shrāddha* of the dead. In the Kumbh Mela at Haridwar, he unfurled the *Pākhaṇḍa Khaṇḍini* flag and thereby bugled against the Paurāṇic blind faiths and *pākhaṇḍas*. Thereafter, he gave up and sacrificed everything. With just a *kaupīn* (loin cloth) and *bhasma* (ash) on his body, he plunged into 'social reform'. Dayanand was a supreme example and illustration of the fact that if one voluntarily gives up the worldly comforts, it can bring one infinite satisfaction, self-confidence and toleration. A bed of straw and a pillow of bricks became his night-bed, and often for days, he went without food. He ate whatever was given to him, and if he got nothing, he neither complained nor asked anyone for anything. This hard penance was his routine, not just for a few days, but for years. He waged a battle against social evils and launched a relentless struggle against the religious malpractices supported by die-hard Brahmans. His knowledge of shāstras, power of debate, expression and personality were such that the opponents could not hold their ground against him.[35] This offended not only the Brahmans, but many others who blindly followed various faiths. Consequently, he became the target of their angst and madness, and faced much abuse, physical attacks and insults. Poisonous snakes were thrown at him, goons were let loose on him, and many attempts were made to poison or drown him. But even in the most trying circumstances, there was no trace of fear, outrage or revenge on Dayanand's face. On

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the contrary, there was always enthusiasm, self-confidence, piety, forgiveness, welfare of others, peace and contentment in his thoughts and action.

He challenged the people of different faiths for open debates, to establish the truth according to the Vedas. The topic most discussed was idol worship which Dayanand regarded as a practice totally non-Vedic. Finally, in November 1869, he took the challenge to the very seat of Hindu orthodoxy and religious knowledge – Kashi. That Vedas do not sanction idol worship was the theme of the shāstrārtha[36] which was held under the chairmanship of the Raja of Kashi. Dayanand single-handedly faced a group of the most reputed scholars of Kashi, whose very word defined religion for millions of Hindus, but the army of idol worshipping Pandits failed to provide any evidence from the Vedas to support their assertion.[37] This was a landmark moment in the history of India – one that was to redefine the meaning of the Vedas and the nature of Hinduism forever. But for Dayanand, more important than winning a debate, was the triumph of truth over religious ignorance and malpractice. It was the conformation of his long-standing assertion, that the Vedas did not permit idol worship. He got the silent acquiescence from the protagonists of Hinduism as they were unable to give any conclusive proof to the contrary. The word of an *Āpta* is called *Śabda.*[38] The Veda being the word of God is the prime evidence in the *Āpta* tradition. The granthas written by the seers are termed as authentic only if they are in conformity with the Vedas.[39] Thus his view point was proved to be true and acceptable. A well known paper published from Calcutta, The Hindu Patriot, published an article on January 17, 1870, in which the editor, giving an account of the Kashi Shāstrārtha, wrote about Dayanand,

> The Rishi-like appearance of the venerable Pandit (Dayanand), his cheerful countenance and child-like simplicity made on our minds an impression never to be effaced. When he began to speak, mantras dropped from his lips, and the wise instruction he gave us forced us to the conviction that the golden age of India has not altogether disappeared.[40]

Seeing him rise way above triumph or defeat, honour or insult, even his opponents had little hesitation in accepting him as a detached *Mahātmā,*[41] a steady intellect (स्थित–प्रज्ञ) and a seeker of truth. Dayanand had trained his mind, body and soul to an extent that he was always ready to face a challenge. He had full control over himself.[42]

Dayanand, with his abilities earned through a lifetime of penance viz. keen curiosity, renunciation, celibacy, *Yoga-Sādhanā,* determination, knowledge of grammar, ability to distinguish between *ārṣa* and *anārṣa* granthas, detachment, tolerance, patience, contentment and steady intellect, was engrossed in discovering the real meaning of the Vedas, to arrive at the fundamental truths of life.[43] He spoke thus in Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā:

> While explaining the Vedas one must keep in mind that unless the exact evidence, adequate reasoning, reference to context of the words of the Vedas, knowledge of Vedāṅgas including Vyākaraṇa, Śatapatha and other Brāhmaṇas, Pūrva Mīmānsā and the like shāstras and other relevant allied shāstras is...

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attained; grace of God, education from well founded scholars, shunning of favouritism under their influence and purity of soul are achieved, the verdict of rishis is consulted, the real meaning of the Vedas does not enlighten the heart of the seeker.[44]

Securing the key to the meanings of the Vedas, Dayanand explored the Vedas and *ārṣa* granthas. Following the *ārṣa* system of analysing the explored basics and truths, he rooted them down in his books – Satyarth Prakash, Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Vedabhāshya, Āryābhivinaya etc. for the welfare of one and all. The answer to his long cherished query about the real form of Shiva, he had got, and recorded the same in the introduction to Āryābhivinaya as:

*Vimalaṁ sukhadaṁ satataṁ suhitaṁ jagati pratataṁ tadu vedagatam.*
*Manasi prakataṁ yadi yasya sukhī sa narosti sadeśvarabhāgadhikaḥ.*[45]

The Supreme Being, Who is free of all blemish and is capable of bestowing all kinds of happiness on every one of us (as His own desires are fully fulfilled), the self-satisfied Self, the One Who is all-pervading in the universe – can be attained only by a sincere study of the Vedas. The devotee, in whose mind that Supreme Self reveals Himself in a clear manner, is the only being who really enjoys true bliss and is in fact, the happiest being in this world. Such a blessed person surely deserves to be congratulated.

The nature of God, well established in the Vedas, has been recorded in the second principle of Arya Samaj as under:

> God is existent, conscious, all-beatitude, formless, almighty, just, merciful, unbegotten, infinite, unchangeable, beginningless, incomparable, the support of all, the Lord of all, all-pervading, omniscient and controller of all from within, ever mature, imperishable, fearless, eternal, pure, creator of the universe.

Furthermore, the secret of attaining *mokṣa* – the ultimate aim of human life and shunning the pain of death has been explained in Āryābhivinaya in the following words:

*Viśeṣabhāgīha vṛṇoti yo hitaṁ, naraḥ parātmānamatīvamānataḥ.*
*Aśeṣaduḥkhāttu vimucya vidyayā, sa mokṣamāpnoti na kāmakāmukaḥ.*[46]

The person whose soul is infused with immeasurable kindness, one who possesses right knowledge, resorts to God by means of right use of perception and other valid means of proof is really the most fortunate among humans. Such a person can gain freedom from all types of unhappiness by acquiring true knowledge. He or she, finally attains emancipation by gaining proximity to God, the source of all bliss, and is thus spared from an unending train of miseries in the form of repeated deaths and births. Whereas the person who has no control over his senses and is inordinately attached to the enjoyment derived from them – one who is thoughtless and has no true knowledge, one who is devoid of righteousness and self-control and does not keep company with the good persons, one who is cunning and deceitful, vain, self-willed and otherwise also wicked – can never attain bliss in the form of final emancipation, for such a person has no faith in the efficacy of the devotion to God: he thus ever remains immersed in the ocean of miseries such as rebirths, re-deaths and other physical ailments.

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Hence, it is but right that one should never be opposed to the commands of God, but should always be fully prepared to obey His Laws and consequently secure success in worldly affairs as well as assure oneself of final emancipation. Only herein lies the fulfilment of human existence.

Following the dictate of his teacher, Dayanand keeping in view universal welfare, gave the clarion call, 'Go back to the Vedas.' He successfully employed his conduct, elocution, writings and other faculties for the propagation of truth. In his revolutionary work Satyarth Prakash, he stated,

> Though the human soul possesses the capacity for ascertaining truth, yet through self-interest, obstinacy, wrong-headedness, ignorance and the like, it is led to renounce truth and incline towards untruth. I have freed myself from these influences while writing this book. It is not my object to hurt any one's sensibilities or to injure anyone. On the other hand, my aim is to further the advancement and enhance the well-being of mankind, to help (all) men in the ascertainment of what is right, and what is false, and to enable them to accept truth and reject falsehood. In my opinion there is no other way of elevating the human race except preaching of truth.[47]

Commenting on Dayanand's Veda Bhāshya, Dr. Bhawani Lal Bhartiya says,

> Dayanand not only dived deep to visualise personally the truth of the Vedas possessing high moral and spiritual values, philosophical concepts and norms of social concern and secrets revealed through scientific insight but also introduced the mankind to the vital findings of the divine knowledge through his Veda Bhāshya.[48]

The great efforts put in by Swami Dayanand in realising the Vedic truths have been profusely appreciated by Sri Aurobindo. He writes:

> In the matter of Vedic interpretation I am convinced that whatever may be the final complete interpretation, Dayananda will be honoured as the first discoverer of the right clues. Amidst the chaos and obscurity of old ignorance and age long misunderstanding his was the eye of direct vision that pierced to the truth and fastened on that which was essential. He has found the keys of the doors that time had closed and rent asunder the seals of the imprisoned fountains.[49]

On judicious and appropriate translation of the Vedas done by Maharshi Dayanand, T.L. Vasvani pays him his rich tributes in the words: 'I acclaim Dayanand as a *rishi* of modern India. A successor was he of the great *rishis* of Aryavrata, a spiritual inheritor of their treasure, its guardian, its custodian for the service of humanity.'[50]

To summarise an epic journey, Mool Shankar had left home to unravel the mystery of the true nature of God and to overcome the sufferings of the cycle of life and

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death. To achieve the goal he had set for himself, he left home, adopted celibacy and practiced *yoga*. The determined mendicant travelled through the country facing untold difficulties. Rationality was his mantra to decide and accept the truth and to reject the untruth. An expositor of the true path, his guru equipped him with the knowhow to distinguish between *ārṣa* and *anārṣa* shāstras. Having learnt Vedic Vyākaraṇa, he acquired the ability to reveal the meaning of the Vedas. He was called *Vītarāga Mahātmā* on account of having achieved absolute renunciation, self imposed discipline of an ascetic life and adoption of the highest human ideals. Crusading aggressively against the prevalent vices and malpractices of various sects, studying the shāstras simultaneously, and meditating on the Veda mantras to unfold their true meanings, he indeed became, a Rishi - a seer! He propounded the teachings of the Vedas for all humans, established monotheism duly approved by the Vedas, discarded polytheism, idol worship and incarnation of God, denounced blind anti-Vedic beliefs and dogmas prevalent in the name of religion, and raised the confidence of the Aryan race by re-establishing the superiority of the Vedic principles and traditions. Although, selfish and misguided opponents left no stone unturned in criticising and giving him a bad name, yet the socially-aware and the learned accepted him as a Maharshi. Many Indian and foreign historians regard him as a builder, establisher and transformer of a new era as he brought to light, the history forgotten and buried under layers of centuries. He worked for making it a part of human behaviour and social life. Dayanand, thus became, the epitome and the very expression of human values, faith and action.

Dayanand re-established the ancient *ārṣa* system of interpreting the shāstras following the evidences from shāstras, arguments and logic as per classical methodology. The question–answer style of writing and system of public debate commonly adopted by Dayanand for arriving at the truth on contentious subjects not only established the scholarship and shāstra-knowhow of this fine debater but proved as well, the sincerity of his intentions and that took to the satisfaction of the benefactors i.e., the common people at large. Hence the logic, objectivity and argumentation in his thoughts and his vision lead one to conclude – 'Rationality', thy name is Dayanand!

The rishi of Nirukta opines that *Etaṁ tarkamṛṣim* - that rationality itself is a sage, a rishi[51] or *Ṛṣirdarśanāt.*[52] These *ārṣa* dictums adorned Swami Dayanand Saraswati with the status of a rishi, in inconformity with the shāstras.

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15. Lajpat Rai Lala, *Swami Dayananda Saraswati*, p. 16
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20. *Ibid.*, p. 79.
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22. *Ibid.*, p. 70.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 73
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    He used to spend most of his time in the practice of Yoga, especially devoting himself to prāṇāyāma etc. Sometimes he would sit in one pose for eighteen hours at a stretch.
31. J.T.F. Jordens, *op. cit.*, p. 275.
32. Harbilas Sarda, 1946, *Life of Dayanand Saraswati*, Vedic Yantralaya, Ajmer, p. xliii
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35. G.A. Natesan in his article *A Dedicated Life in the Saints of India*, Madras, n.d.
36. Devendranath Mukhopadhyaya, 1952, *Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati kā Jīwan Charit*, Vol. I, Tr. Pt. Ghasiram, Arya Sahitya Mandal, Ajmer, pp. 166-67
37. Harbilas Sarda, *op. cit.*, pp. 72-73.

a. The Rohilkhand Akhbar (Nov.1969). 'Dayanand Saraswati Swami obtained a victory over the Banaras pandits and Banaras pandits falsely gave out that they had been victorious.'

b. Bhawani Lal Bhartiya Dr., *op. cit.*, p. 55
   The Kashi pandits admitted – (sannyāsi) Dayanand asks for evidence from the Vedas in support of idol worship. What to speak of offering evidence from the Vedas, we have not even seen the Vedas.

38. *Nyāya Śāstra*, 1.1.7; आप्तोपदेशः शब्दः।
39. Bhawani Lal Bhartiya, Dr., *op. cit.*, p. 53.
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41. Devendranath Mukhopadhyaya, *op. cit.*, p. 185.
42. J.T.F. Jordens, *op. cit.*, p. 291.
'He always had to discover his own way and to decide for himself what direction he would take.... The bold individualist was the fountainhead of the astounding originality of many facets of thought and endeavour.'
43. G.A. Natesan in his article '*A Dedicated Life*' writes, "After Haridwar Kumbh, 'he retired into solitude to perform *tapas*.... to undertake the work of giving rational interpretation to the Vedic Mantras wherewith the people could easily understand what Vedic religion was."
44. Swami Dayanand, 1967, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā*, Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Amritsar, p. 88.
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विमलं सुखदं सततं सुहितं जगति प्रततं तदु वेदगतम्।
मनसि प्रकटं यदि यस्य सुखी स नरोस्ति सदेश्वरभागधिकः॥
46. *Ibid.*, shloka 7.
विशेषभागीह वृणोति यो हितं, नरः परात्मानमतीवमानतः।
अशेषदुःखात्तु विमुच्य विद्यया, स मोक्षमाप्नोति न कामकामुकः॥
47. Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash*, (ed. Yudhishthira Mimamska, 1972), Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Sonepat, introduction p. 3.
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50. T.L. Vasvani, *Rishi Dayanand*, Gita Publishing House, Poona p. 20.
51. *Nirukta*, 13,12, cited in Swami Dayanand Saraswati's *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā*, p. 87; एतं तर्कमृषिम्।
52. *Nirukta*, 2.11; ऋषिर्दर्शनात्।

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# CHAPTER 2

# The Philosophical Principles of Swami Dayanand

*Bhawani Lal Bhartiya*

The religio-cultural renaissance of the nineteenth century is an unforgettable chapter of Indian history. During this period, the movements of new awakening launched by the Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Theosophical Society, the Ramakrishna Mission, etc. gave a new direction to the society, religion, culture, and philosophy of the country. The new dimensions infused into the philosophical thinking of India by great men like Rammohan Roy, Devendranath Thakur, Swami Dayanand, Keshub Chandra Sen and Swami Vivekanand are yet to be studied in detail with earnestness. These great men who were the torch bearers of the neo-rising have received recognition only as social reformers. But their philosophical ideas have attracted little attention.

Raja Rammohan Roy was the pioneer among the builders of modern India. He propagated his ideas on the basis of Vedic monotheism and Upaniṣadic theology. He took the help of the Upaniṣads to teach and preach monotheism to the Indian masses who were labouring under the dense clouds of Hindu polytheistic beliefs. Although he was influenced by the monotheism of Islam and Supreme-Spiritism of the Sufis, yet his philosophical ideas were essentially based on the Upaniṣads and the Vedānta. In order to acquaint the common masses with the philosophy of the ancient Aryan race, Rammohan Roy published *Vedāntasāra,* an essay in Bengali, containing paraphrases of selected sūtras of the *Brahmasūtrabhāshya,* in 1815. He issued its English version, *viz. Translation of an Abridgement of the Vedānta,* the following year. He wrote commentaries on *Ken, Īśa, Kaṭha* and *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣads* in Bengali in 1816-19, and issued their English translations as well. An analytical study of Rammohan Roy's commentaries on the Upaniṣads and the Vedānta leads us to believe clearly and firmly that he had rejected the non-dualistic philosophy propounded by Shankarāchārya.

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After Rammohan Roy, the responsibility to lead the Brahmo Samaj devolved upon Devendranath Thakur whose philosophical ideas and religious beliefs were inspired by the Upaniṣads. He stated his categorical disagreement with Shankara's non-dualism and his concept of *Māyā*. Devendranath firmly believed that the concept of dualism has to be accepted if any notion of worshipping and prayer has to work. He compiled epigrammatic sentences mostly from the Upaniṣads in the book entitled *Brahmo Dharma* which states the principles of Brahmo Samaj, and in which Brahma has been regarded as the one and the only one eternally existing entity. Thus according to Brahmo Dharma in the beginning of the Cosmos, there was only Brahma, the one and the only one existing entity, and there was nothing other than it, and everything has been generated from this Brahma. It can be imagined on the basis of this fundamental principle of Brahmo Dharma that though Devendranath had rejected the concept of Māyā, he believed, like Shankara, in Brahma being both the efficient and the material causes of creation.

Swami Dayanand, the founder of the Arya Samaj, was a contemporary of Devendranath Thakur and Keshub Chandra Sen. During his stay at Calcutta, he had a detailed discussion with them on matters relating to religion, society and some other topics. The preceptors of Brahmo Samaj were carrying out the propagation of their religious beliefs whilst also bearing their household duties and responsibilities. On the other hand, Dayanand Saraswati had joined the fourth order of life, *sannyās*, on having been administered the sacrament following his deep urge for temporal renunciation even at the very outset of his youth. Like many ordinary hermits, Dayanand too had embraced the non-dualistic philosophy of Shankara in the beginning of his life as a *Sannyāsī*. He has himself acknowledged in his autobiography that Brahmānand and others had convinced him that "God and Soul are one and the same. In the beginning also while studying the Vedānta I was convinced to an extent that 'I am Brahma' and the belief had now got strengthened." During this period, he studied the *Vedāntasāra*, the *Vedānta Paribhāṣā*, etc., which enunciate the principles of non-dualism. The influence of non-dualism on Dayanand's philosophical ideas remained in considerable measure even during his learning under the guidance of Swami Virjanand. But when at Agra while preaching on the basis of *Pañchadaśi* authored by Swami Vidyaranya, he discovered that according to this book, even God gets stricken by doubt and misconception, his faith in *Advaitavāda* (non-dualism) was shattered. Only thereafter did Dayanand enunciate the principle of beginninglessness and eternity of God, Soul and *Prakṛti* after an exhaustive, earnest and analytical study of the Indian philosophical treatises. In order to facilitate a study of Dayanand's philosophical principles, the Arya Samajist scholars have named this principle *Traitavāda*.

Whereas Dayanand's social reforms, his religious revisionism and nationalism have often been discussed at length, his philosophical principles have received very little argumentation. If we carry out a close study of Swami Dayanand's books, it becomes evident that a clear, well thought-out and reasoned philosophical thinking was at the back of his personality, works and action.

Dayanand was a realistic philosopher who gave a pragmatic and rational explanation of the *sṛṣṭi* (Cosmos). Dayanand's philosophy, based on a conception of

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Soul and God as different entities, is severely critical of Shankara's postulates of *Advaitavāda* (non-dualism) and *Māyā* (delusion). According to him, the Vedas, Upaniṣads and Ṣaḍdarśana (the six Indian philosophical treatises) are unanimous in their acceptance of eternity of God, Soul and Matter. To substantiate this view, he cited as evidence the well known hymn from the Ṛgveda which reads - *Dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāyā samānaṁ vṛkṣaṁ pari ṣasvajāte*[1] wherein the Soul and God have been regarded as similar because both are characterised by being conscious and intelligent; both are conjoined as the Soul is pervaded by the pervading God; both are friendly and eternal. The matter *(prakṛti)* has also been regarded as unborn and eternal, and the material cause of the Cosmos. In the same context he has also quoted this adage from Śvetāśvatara[2] *Ajāmekāṁ lohitaśuklakṛṣṇāṁ bahvīḥ prajāḥ srjamānāṁ sarūpāḥ* to clarify the idea that God, Soul and Matter are three unborn and hence beginningless and eternal entities, and are the causes of the Cosmos. According to him, the mutual relationship between God and Soul is one of the Worshipped and the Worshipper, of the Ruler and the Ruled, of the Teacher and the Taught, and of the Master and the Servant. Citing numerous Vedic hymns in different contexts as evidence, Dayanand Saraswati further authenticated the aforementioned roles of God and Soul.

Dayanand's philosophical principles have been mentioned in almost all his books, whenever required contextually. However, they have been exhaustively dealt with in his Satyarth Prakash, Vedāntidhvāntnivārana, Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā and Vedabhāshyas.

A brief outline of Dayanand's philosophy is being presented here, under three sub-heads, viz. (i) Evidence emanating from a thorough examination, (ii) Metaphysical considerations, (iii) Ethical considerations/code of conduct:

***Pramāṇa Mīmānsā (A Thorough Examination of the Reliability of Evidence)***

The means of acquisition of true knowledge are discussed under the subject '*Pramāṇa Mīmānsā*'. Swami Dayanand has discussed this topic in Satyarth Prakash under the heading 'The Criteria of Test'. According to him, the examination for arriving at a true assessment of an issue should be carried out on the following five bases:[3]

i. Whatever is in consonance with the attributes, actions and nature of God, and is also in conformity with the Vedic Lore is true, and whatever is contrary to it is all untrue.
ii. Whatever is in tune with the laws of nature is true, and whatever is violative of these is untrue.
iii. Whatever is consistent with the teachings of the trusted sages and reliable seers is true, and whatever contravenes these is untrue.
iv. Whatever action or conduct is in conformity with the voice of our conscience is right, and whatever is against that is worth discarding.
v. Whatever is supported by the eight types of evidence enumerated in the Nyāyashāstra should be regarded as authentic.

Thereafter, the Swami gives a detailed definition of four types of evidence, *viz.* Evidence of Perception, Evidence of Inference, Evidence of Analogy, and Evidence of the Word from the Holy, as given in the Nyāyashāstra.[4] He regards the four additional types of evidence also among the reliable ones. These are: Evidence from History, Evidence by

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Implication, Evidence of Probability, and Evidence of Non-Existence. However, Dayanand hastens to add that if the Historical Evidence is treated as a part of the Evidence of Holy Word, and also if the evidence of Implication, of Probability and of Non-Existence are merged into the Evidence of Inference then there will be left only four types of evidence. This leads us to conclude that in Dayanand's view the *Pramāṇa Mīmānsā* propounded in the Nyāyadarśana is acceptable and admirable in as much as it is very practicable.

Dayanand does not agree with the proponents of *Navya Nyāya* who have practically overlooked the element of *prameya* (a proposition of a universal truth to be proved) and have laid all the emphasis and wisdom at their command only on the *Pramāṇa Mīmānsā*. The riddles and illusions resorted to by the proponents of *Navya Nyāya* have been dubbed as crow's cawing by Dayanand. He believes that the knowledge of evidences is essential for acquiring a correct knowledge of the Core Cosmographical Truths. And this knowledge of evidences should be acknowledged as a means for realising such a goal.

***Dayanand's Metaphysical Philosophy***

As we have seen, Dayanand believes in *Dvaita* or the dualism of God and Soul as two entities with separate identities. Firstly, he regards the living and non-living as two clearly different elements, and secondly even among the living beings, he considers God different from Soul. The non-living element is matter which is inert and which has been variously described as *pradhān* (principal element), *avyakta* (imperceptible element), etc. in the Sāmkhya Darśana. While elucidating what God and Soul are, Swami Dayanand Saraswati takes recourse to Sāmkhya and Nyāya philosophies. Whereas he accepts Yogadarśana's definition of God carried in the aphorism *Kleśakarmavipākāśayairaparāmṛṣṭaḥ Puruṣaviśeṣa īśvaraḥ*[5] (which means the *puruṣa* is untouched by grief, action, result, etc.), he takes *puruṣa* to mean both God and Soul as established in the Sāmkhya. Thus his beliefs regarding God are closer to the beliefs of Vijñānabhikshu and the like, the proponents of theism in Sāmkhya philosophy. Swami Dayanand accepts Sāmkhya of Kapila as a statement of theistic philosophy. According to him, one who regards Acharya Kapila as an atheist should really himself be taken as an atheist (and not Kapila). In order to buttress his postulates he cites some aphorisms from the Sāmkhya Darśana such as *Īśvarāsiddheḥ, Pramāṇābhāvānna tatsiddhiḥ, Sambandhābhāvānnānumānam,*[6] etc. and explains the correct and the real meaning of these aphorisms.

According to Dayanand, God is Ever-existent, Knowledgeable and Blissful. He is Immanent, All-pervading, Undecaying, Imperishable, Fearless, Eternal, Holy and the Creator of the Universe. One's worship is due to Him and only to Him. God doles out reward and retribution to the souls as per their righteous and unrighteous deeds. And so He is just and fair. That, however, should not lead any one to doubt His being Kind and Merciful.

While carrying out a detailed and analytical investigation into the issues relating to God, Dayanand establishes in the seventh chapter of the Satyarth Prakash that the Vedas postulate monotheism. He proves the existence of God by citing evidences led

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mainly by *pratyakṣapramāṇa* (evidence of perception). He discusses whether God has a form or is formless. He states what the word 'Almighty' means, and what the rewards of admiration and worship of, and prayer to God are, whether He is *Saguṇa* (with traits/attributes/virtues) or *Nirguṇa* (without traits/attributes/virtues), whether He incarnates or not, whether He pardons one or not for one's misdeeds. He has also spoken of several other relevant issues in detail. Similarly in this very treatise, Dayanand has tried to prove the origin of the different names of God mentioned in the Vedas and other scriptures on the basis of grammatical rules. He has taken up a topic specifically devoted to the admiration of, prayer to and meditation on God in the Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā. Some critics have called the concept of God visualised by Dayanand as his personal God. Such critics think that Dayanand also believes in the same kind of God as do the Semitic religions such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam who imagine that God lives at a particular place and rules over the living beings. But this notion is not correct. Swami Dayanand does not consider God to be confined to one place. Instead, he considers Him to be Omnipresent. He, being Immanent, is both inside and outside the living beings. He is not *kartum akartum anyathākartum* (can do what is impossible to be done, won't do what He must do in all fairness, and can do things even in an unnatural manner) as described in Semitic religions. Dayanand's God is what has been described in the Upaniṣads as one with the attributes of being the embodiment of Truth and Fairness, Knowledge-Incarnate and Eternity-personified. Knowledge, action and power are His natural traits.

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The Swami has fully succeeded in establishing God and Soul as two distinct entities. Upaniṣadic gospels like *Nityo nityānāṁ cetanaścetanānāmeko bahūnāṁ yo vidadhāti kāmān*[7] only support his view. Swami Dayanand accepts what Nyāya Darśana believes to be Soul's attributes, which are: desires and aspirations, jealousy and competitiveness, courage and strength, pleasure and happiness, misery and bewailing, consciousness and knowledge.[8] Besides, he also accepts some more indicative attributes of soul which have been enlisted in Vaiśeṣika Darśana as: *prāṇa* (outbreath), *apāna* (inbreath), *nimeṣa* (closing of eyes), *unmeṣa* (opening of eyes), *manaḥ* (faith and feelings); *gati* (motion); *indriya* (senses), *antarvikāra* (inner changes in the body and the mind).[9] As per Dayanand, soul is detached, located at one place in the body, free to carry out actions but dependent in receiving reward or reprisal, eternal and having tendency to get freed from bondages. According to him soul is limited in knowledge and power, is of the size of an atom, is the doer of deeds and receiver of their results. Souls are limitless in number, taking birth in the form of different species of varied types, and passing through happiness and misery.

As stated in the Yogadarśana, this Soul practices *dhāraṇā* (concentration of mind) and *dhyāna* (meditation) and attains *samādhi* (trance/absorption in self) through its efforts by observing *yamas* (social codes) and *niyamas* (codes for the welfare of the self) and using means of *āsanas* (postures of the body for exercise), *prāṇāyāma* (controlling breath) and *pratyāhāra* (withdrawal of mind from sensuality). Swamiji has given a full exposition of *Aṣṭāngayoga* (eight limbs of the practice of Yoga) while writing on the topic of *Upāsanā* (prayer and worship) in his Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā. According to him, through four means of *śravaṇa* (listening with devotion), *manana*

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(continued contemplation and reflection) *nididhyāsana* (repetitive remembering) and *sākṣātkāra* (sensual perception) and with the help of six assets like *śama* (pacifying passions), *dama* (control) etc., a desire to attain *mokṣa* (mukti, salvation) arises in the mind and heart of a *jīva* which ultimately leads him to follow the path of salvation. As per Dayanand whereas *mokṣa* is the complete extrication of the three kinds of misery, it is also the harbinger of extreme state of bliss, and so leads one to unalloyed happiness. Thus he presents this topic after having brought about a combined form of the views expressed in the Sāmkhya, the Nyāya and the Vedānta Darśanas. But, that the Soul returns to this Cosmos after the period of *mokṣa* is over, is a unique tenet established by Dayanand. He cites evidence in support of this tenet from the Vedas, Upaniṣads, etc. and also states the logic that the capacity of the soul is limited, and the salvation achieved by it with the help of limited capacity and means cannot be infinite in terms of time. While establishing the tenet of return to the Cosmos after *mokṣa*, Swami Dayanand puts these scriptural sentences on the propositional side of the argument: *Na ca punarāvarttate. Na ca punarāvarttata iti,*[10] *Anāvṛttiḥ śabdādanāvṛttiḥ śabdāt,*[11] *Yad gatvā na nivartante taddhāma paramaṁ mama*[12] etc. He quotes *Kasya nūnam* (कस्य नूनम्), etc. hymns from the Ṛgveda and *Te brahmaloke ha parāntakāle parāmṛtāt parimucyanti sarve*[13] etc. to establish the tenet of the return of Souls to the Cosmos after the period of *mokṣa* is over.

According to Swami Dayanand, the realisation of God which he terms as *mokṣa* is the ultimate object and the *summum bonum* of *jīva* (soul in human body). For attaining *mokṣa,* a combination of knowledge, righteous deeds and meditation of (on) God are the pre-requisites. Unlike Shankarāchārya, he is not in favour of renunciation of an active life. He accepts the tenet contained in the aphorism *Ṛte jñānānna muktiḥ* (ऋते ज्ञानान्न मुक्तिः) and regards it as appropriate and essential that one should keep on working and conducting oneself throughout life according to the dictates of the religious scriptures. Following *Kurvanneveha karmāṇi jijīviṣecchataṁ samāḥ*[14] the *jīva* is required to carry out its duties conscientiously and righteously, and thus lead an earthly life for a hundred years. According to him, the Soul does not renounce action, even after life in *mokṣa.* Instead, it moves about at will in the Godly regime after having acquired exceptional powers. According to the Brāhmaṇic utterance *Śṛṇvan śrotraṁ bhavati, sparśayan tvagbhavati,*[15] even when the *jīva* is out of its physical body and free from its socket of perceptual and acting organs, it enjoys the state of *mokṣa* with the help of its natural powers. Swamiji has mentioned wisdom, asceticism, *Ṣaṭkasampatti* i.e., six assets which are *śama* (pacifying human passions), *dama* (control), *uparati* (renunciation), *titikṣā* (tolerance), *śraddhā* (sense of devotion), and *samādhāna* (acquiring equilibrium of mind) and a pressing desire for *mokṣa* as the means for attaining *mokṣa.*[16]

Swami Dayanand has accepted the matter *(prakṛti)* as an independently existing material cause of the creation of the Cosmos. However, the matter is not independently capacitated to create the Cosmos, as it is inert. It gets converted into Cosmos only when God's power of creation comes into operation. While explaining the process of the creation of the Cosmos, Dayanand has accepted the idea of *Ārambhvāda* as enunciated in the Nyāyadarśana, and has rejected the theory of illusion *Vivartavāda* as suggested by the advocates of non-dualism - *Advaitavāda.* He strongly condemns *Māyāvāda* or

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*Vivartavāda.* He has also accepted the theory of *Satkāryavāda* propounded in the Sāmkhya Darśana citing the logic that it cannot be denied that there has to be a cause for its effect to appear in the form of some work, and that the origin of this effect lies in the cause. The theory of *Asatkāryavāda* is not acceptable to him on the same basis on which is unacceptable the theory of *Vivartavāda* whose proponents cite the impracticable and false logic of the string being taken as a snake, and the conch being taken as silver.

***Dayanand's View of the Ṣaḍ-darśanam***

One of the characteristics of Swami Dayanand's philosophical thoughts is that he regards all the six Darśanas as congruent and in conformity with one another in ideas. He considers them successful in analysing this Cosmos in as much as these Darśanas are complementary rather than contradictory to one another. According to him, the Sāmkhya philosopher clarifies that Matter and Soul are two separate eternal entities by establishing the former as inert and the latter as conscious and intelligent. Also, Sāmkhya's subject of examination and analysis is how the inert matter turns into Cosmos following its being handled by the Supreme Soul. The author of Yogadarśana aims at enlightening people about a practicable and pragmatic way of meditating on and praying to God. Nyāyadarśana, it goes without saying, is a philosophy based on reasoning and logic without the help of which no person can succeed in carrying out an examination of the reality and essence of this Cosmos and thus arriving at the truth. Before explaining and elucidating the sixteen elements like *pramāṇa* (evidence), *prameya* (the proposition to be proved), etc. the author of Nyāyadarśana has enlightened us that *apavarga* (deliverance from a further transmigration of soul) can be attained through the knowledge of these elements because one cannot have a true understanding of life and God without knowing the *prameyas*, and that for their understanding the *pramāṇas* are required. In this very context, it is for strengthening man's reasoning power and sharpening his power of minute understanding that an exposition has been carried out of *vāda* (healthy discussion), *jalpa* (sophistic debate aimed at defeating the opponent), *vitaṇḍā* (refuting the opponent's views by trying to establish a negative view), *chala* (contradicting a statement through equivocation), *jāti* (reply based on a false analogy), *hetvābhāsa* (persuasive but fallacious argument) and *nigrahasthāna* (citing an unjustifiable ground for defeating the opponent). The principle relating to atomic theory that has been examined in the Vaiśeṣika Darśana is very close to the findings of modern science on the subject. The Vaiśeṣika philosophy carries out an analytical study of the aforesaid elements, and thus states elaborately the very religion which leads us to our temporal rise and heavenly blissfulness.

According to Swami Dayanand, the Mīmānsā philosophy unfolds that form of religion which has been presented in the Brāhmaṇic scriptures as an elucidation of Vedic religious ceremonies. Here it has been asserted that these Vedic rituals alone are the means of observing righteousness, and also the Vedic adages which inspire the performance of these ceremonies are pronounced as the original source of religion. The intended subject of Mīmānsā Darśana is the determination and exposition of the rituals which are to be used in different *yajñās* (oblations or religious sacrifices).

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According to the Swami, an attunement has been effected in the Vedānta philosophy of those Upaniṣadic adages which establish that Brahma (the Supreme Soul) is the efficient cause of the Cosmos. According to him, the interpretation purporting non-dualism given to Brahmasūtras by Shankara runs counter to the real intentions of the writer of these sūtras (aphorisms). Acharya Badarayan, the writer of Shārīrika Sūtras, never intended to establish and pronounce non-dualism of Brahma and the non-reality of the soul and the matter. Dayanand, like Ramanuj, believes that Acharya Bodhayan who preceded Shankara had carried out the interpretation of Brahmasūtras establishing dualism (separation of God and Soul) and that interpretation alone was closer to the real intentions of the writer of the Sūtras. Due to paucity of time, Swami Dayanand could not elaborate his belief that there is congruence and attunement among all the six Darśanas, and he was able only to hint at this conformity.

Following the philosophical ideas propounded by Dayanand, some of his succeeding philosophers such as Swami Darshananand, Narayan Swami, Swami Brahmamuni, Aryamuni, Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya, Udayavir Shastri and others have carried out an examination of Dayanand's postulates and beliefs, and have written lucid commentaries thereon. They have also carried out an exposition of his philosophical principles by writing commensurate commentaries on Upaniṣads, Vedānta and Gitā besides writing numerous original books.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. *Ṛgveda*, 1.164.20; द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परि षस्वजाते। तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्त्यनश्नन्नन्यो अभि चाकशीति।
2. *Śvetāśvatara*, 4.5; अजामेकां लोहितशुक्लकृष्णां बह्वी: प्रजा: सृजमानां सरूपा:
3. Dayanand, *Satyarth Prakash* (ed. Y. Mimamsaka, 1972), Ramlal Kapoor Trust, pp. 80-81.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 81
5. *Yogadarśana, Samādhipāda*, 24; क्लेशकर्मविपाकाशयैरपरामृष्ट: पुरुषविशेष ईश्वर:
6. *Sāmkhyadarśana*, 1.92; 5.10; 5.11 respectively; ईश्वरासिद्धेः, प्रमाणाभावान्न तत्सिद्धिः, सम्बन्धाभावान्नानुमानम्।
7. *Kaṭhopaniṣad*, 2.2.13; नित्यो नित्यानां चेतनश्चेतनानामेको बहूनां यो विदधाति कामान्
8. *Nyāya Darśana*, 1.1.10
9. *Vaiśeṣika Darśana*, 3.2.4
10. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 8.15.1; न च पुनरावर्त्तते। न च पुनरावर्त्तत इति।
11. *Vedānta Darśana*, 4.4.22; अनावृत्ति: शब्दादनावृत्ति: शब्दात्।
12. *Gita*, 15.6; यद् गत्वा न निवर्तन्ते तद्धाम परमं मम।
13. *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*, 3.2.6; ते ब्रह्मलोके ह परान्तकाले परामृतात् परिमुच्यन्ति सर्वे
14. *Yajurveda*, 40.2; कुर्वन्नेवेह कर्माणि जिजीविषेच्छतं समा:
15. *Śatapatha*, 14 kāṇḍa; श्रृण्वन् श्रोत्रं भवति, स्पर्शयन् त्वग्भवति
16. Dayanand Saraswati, *op. cit*, chapter 9, pp. 361-362.

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# CHAPTER 3

# Certain Distinctive Vedic Opinions of Maharshi Dayanand

*Raghuvir Vedalankar*

There have been a host of elite expositors and exegetes of the Vedas, ancient as well as modern, both western and Indian, prior to Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati. However, Dayanand not only deliberated upon the Vedas but also declared them the very basis of his life and deeds. He established some distinctive opinions regarding the Vedas, grounded on the principles of Yāska and Manu, which were contrary to the thinking of the pandits of the time. With indomitable courage and pride, Dayanand made a revolutionary contribution towards reclaiming the lost glory and the highest status of the Vedas. He laid down the thematic and referential teachings of the Vedas, as follows:

***Only the Samhitās designated as the Veda***

Maharshi Dayanand demolished the fallacious notion pertaining to the nature of the Vedas. It is largely due to his efforts that today only the four Samhitās are universally recognised as the Vedas. Kātyāyana had established *Mantrabrāhmaṇayorvedanāmdheyam*[1] under his *yajñik* practice or ceremonies. Although its scope was confined to Kātyāyana's yajñik and ritualistic interpretation, but over time, owing to some misconceptions, it came to be established as a universal precept. As a result, the Brāhminical texts and Upaniṣads too came to be designated as the Vedas. Maharshi Dayanand strongly refuted this argument and reinforced with profound validity only the Samhitās to be the Vedas. Maharshi accounts the following reasons to disown Brāhminical texts as the Vedas:

i. Brāhminical texts are an elucidation of the Vedas. Being interpretive texts, the Vedic mantras in these texts are used referentially to aid the interpretations.
ii. Brāhminical texts do not comprise divine knowledge and have been authored by the sages. For example, the author of *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* is sage Yājñavalkya.

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iii. None other than Kātyāyana has accepted Brāhminical texts as the Vedas.[2]

***Self-evidence of the Vedas***

The Vedas, according to Swamiji, needed no proof or confirmation to validate their authority or authenticity. Manu regarded the Vedas or the Śruti as *svataḥ pramāṇa* or self-evident and Smṛtī texts as *parataḥ pramāṇa* or dependant on concurring with the Vedas for their authenticity. Manu believed that in case of a contradiction between Smṛtī and Śruti (the revealed knowledge of God) the Vedas should be taken as authority.[3] This claim however, was discarded or had become extinct and the very authenticity of the Vedas was denied during the period of Debendranath, the founder of the Ādi Brahmo Samaj. The credit of resurrecting the faith in the Vedas as self-evident goes to Maharshi Dayanand.

Swamiji affirmed that one should accept the luminous validity of the Vedas which is like that of the Sun. The sun light does not require any proof of its existence or authenticity, and the same is applicable to the Vedas.[4] He further asserted that the Brāhminical texts, all the 1127 branches of the Vedas and other texts substantiate their validity owing to the Vedas. He believed the Vedas to be above and beyond evidence from other texts as the latter contain numerous anti-Vedic instances. It is befitting to assert that Swamiji was able to establish his doctrine in a profound manner.

***Major Themes in the Vedas***

Ceremonies and ritualism prevailed during the time of Sāyaṇa and Mahīdhara, therefore these Acharyas rendered ritualistic or *yajñik* notions to the Vedic mantras. This promulgated the notion that the Vedas were ritualistic only. The author of "Vedāṅga", Jyotiśācārya Lagadha too, expressed similar views.[5] Maharshi Dayanand however, contradicted the notion, and declared that it was unreasonable of Sāyaṇa to call the Vedas merely ceremonial.[6] It is true that *yajña* finds mention in the Vedas but it is utterly inappropriate to affirm the relevance of the Vedas based on yajña alone.

Maharshi Dayanand enunciated four themes expounded in the Vedas: *vijñāna* (science), *karma* (action), *upāsanā* (worship) and *jñāna* (knowledge). He designates knowledge to be supreme among these four.[7] It is important to point out that Dayanand considers the term *vijñāna* not merely as science as commonly understood, rather as a comprehensive term encompassing everything ranging from God to the microscopic matter *vijñāna*.[8] According to him, *vijñāna* is an integrated application of *karma* (action), *upāsanā* (devotion) and *jñāna* (knowledge). In this way, Maharshi's declaration regarding the relevance of the Vedas was exhaustive and bold. He did render the ritualistic interpretation of the mantras. However, his perception was not only unique and novel, but also extremely elaborate in comparison to that of the prior Acharyas. Swamiji rendered a scientific interpretation to the overall practice of the *Yajña*,[9] where as the ritualistic interpretation of the prior acharyas was confined to offering oblation in the *yajña kuṇḍa* and the heinous acts of animal sacrifice.

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***Logical Interpretation of Veda-mantras***

A notion, prevalent at that time, pertained to the futility of the Veda mantras. This belief was nourished not only by the masses but by the erudite Vedic scholars as well, and was affirmed on the following three grounds:

i. Influenced by the ritualistic ceremony, Sage Jaimini declared that anything other than the *yajñik* rituals, was extraneous to the Vedic hymns.[10]

ii. Jaimini considered those mantras meaningless that were not meant for ritualistic purposes. But he offered a befitting answer[11] to Acharya Kautsya who made an extreme statement that all Vedic mantras were absurd or illogical because they firstly, carry multiple contradictory meanings; secondly, are ambiguous and vague; and thirdly, are disjointed and incoherent.

iii. The modern scholars too, who were largely western declared the Vedas to be a mere repository of strange and indistinct shepherd lore. Dayanand's intervention at this point of time was not only reformatory but also revolutionary, as he declared the Vedas to be the repository of all the true knowledge.[12] He affirmed his stance in his interpretation of mantras in Vedabhāshya and Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā.

iv. It was believed that the knowledge pertaining to navigation, planets, constellation, heavenly bodies etc., was first acquired by the western scientists and the Aryans were incognizant of the astronomical knowledge. Maharshi Dayanand successfully countered this myth by alluding to the references of astronomical knowledge found in the Vedas. Thus, Maharshi was able to establish the provenance of disciplines such as Mathematics, creation of universe etc.[13]

***Appropriate Application of the Mantras***

Maharshi refused to accept the stance of earlier commentators that Vedic incantations were purposive, befitted only for specified rites and ceremonies. Rejecting the claim, he stressed upon the threefold functions of mantras as mentioned in the Nirukta for his commentary on the Vedas. Relying on *Viniyoga-vāda,* the earlier commentators had to twist and contrive the meanings of Vedic hymns. This is evident from the following example. In *Caritrānste śundhāmi,*[14] Mahidhara interprets the word, *caritra* (चरित्र) as 'hooves', which does not appear logical or reasonable from any point of view. He alludes it to the act of purification of the limbs of the horse by the wife of the host or the master of ceremonies, whereas, there is not even a slight reference to it in the respective incantation. Maharshi Dayanand rejected this interpretation and reanalysed it to connote a teacher advocating his pupils to improve their character.

It would be quite relevant to relate an incident narrated by Dr. Surender Kumar Āyurvedālaṇkāra, in this context. He mentions, "I once saw a Brahman performing ablutions by touching the limbs of a lamb in the water of a stream and reciting, *Vācaṁ te śundhāmi, cakṣuste śundhāmi, śrotraṁ te śundhāmi.*[15] I stood there watching the ritual and after he had completed the cleansing, I saw him chop the young one's neck off, in the next moment. I questioned him about the reason for killing the innocent animal. He replied that he had followed the dictates of the verses enjoined in the Vedas."[16]

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The incident serves to illustrate the rampant practice of utter sacrilege in the garb of Vedic rituals. Cow slaughter too, is performed in the name of the Vedas. Maharshi raised his voice against such unpropitious practices saying that a holy text can never lay down such cruel and heinous testament. The Veda proclaims the cow as *aghnyā* (अघ्न्या) signifying that it should not be killed and further states *Paśūnāṁ bhūyāsam* (पशूनां भूयासम्) meaning 'I should be dear to all creatures'.

***True Interpretation of the Vedas***

The first and the foremost contribution of Maharshi Dayanand lies in offering an apt analysis and interpretation of the Vedas. He based his expositions on the principles propounded by Yāskāchārya, and gave various applicable, useful and meaningful interpretations to Vedic terminologies. He also took recourse to Nirukta and various Brāhminical texts besides relying on his ingenious faculties, which is a divine quality of an enlightened seer. It would be quite relevant to cite some examples in this context.

The Vedas are replete with verses dedicated to the deity, Agni. Acharyas such as Yāska connote it to the almighty, whereas western scholars relate *agni* to fire. Maharshi Dayanand interprets *agni* in varied ways, according to the context, designating it as the king, priest, air, energy, judge, sun, Almighty, scholar, commander, soul etc. In Brāhminical texts too, *agni* finds mention in varied forms.[17] The very first verse of the Ṛgveda *Agnim ile* (अग्निम् ईले) is interpreted as 'I pay homage to lord Agni' whereas in the Nirukta[18] it is mentioned as *Īḍiradhyeṣaṇākarmā pūjākarmā vā.* Maharshi provides a scientific explanation by interpreting the verse *Agnim ile* (अग्निम् ईले) on the basis of *Adhyeṣaṇā* (अध्येषणा) as the material energy like the one used for the working of a machine or a vehicle.[19] In Śatapatha, *Agni* is referred as *aśva* or 'horse'.[20] On the basis of the above reference Swamiji states: *Vegādiguṇavantamaśvamagnimīḍate kāryyārthamadhīcchantīti vedyam*[21] and refers to 'देवान्' in the second verse which he interprets as, *Divyānīndrīyāṇi vidyādidivyaguṇān divyān ṛatūn divyān bhogānvā.*[22] Similarly, Swamiji also interprets the hymns on *Indra, Rudra* and *Ashwin* in multitudinous ways.[23] For him 'आपः' (āpaḥ) does not stand for water alone, but is interpreted as learned women, meritorious girls, *Āptaprajñā, prāṇa* and the Almighty God as well, as per the reference.

***Age, Time, Form and Purpose of the Vedas***

The western and some Indian scholars have dated the origin of the Vedas around the 3000 B.C., whereas according to Maharshi Dayanand the Vedas had their genesis in the heart of the great sages and he assigned them to be 1,96,08,52,976 years old. Swamiji contradicted the western notion and stated that his dating of the Vedas might not coincide with that of Max Müller but the grounds of contradiction are assured and undeniable. Swami Dayanand writes: Max Müller has written in his books on Sanskrit literature that "there is not even a single evidence to prove the antiquity of the Vedas. In support of his view, he cites *hiraṇyagarbha* as an evidence which is untrue because he failed to comprehend the precise meaning of the terms, *hiraṇyagarbha*[24] and *agniḥ pūrvebhiḥ.*[25] He interpreted the term *hiraṇya* as gold which came into existence much

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later after creation and went on to relate the origin of the element with that of its appearance in the Vedic text which cannot be treated as valid and just."

In Brāhminical texts *hiraṇya* relates to luminosity,[26] elixir, liberation, sun,[27] fame,[28] Indra,[29] soul,[30] prāṇa,[31] age,[32] etc. Swamiji defines the multiple contextual meanings of the word *hiraṇya* in Brāhminical texts as:

i. Luminosity, that is science (*vijñāna*), is in its womb or its very nature.
ii. Luminosity, also an elixir or salvation, is possessed by it.
iii. Luminosity, the luminous Sun and other heavenly bodies, are in its being.
iv. Illumination, the very entity of every soul, is under its control.
v. Glory, which is inherent in it.
vi. The one who possesses all this is *Hiraṇyagarbha*, the Almighty, who is illumination itself and has the sun, *vāyu* (air) and *agni* (fire) at his command.[33]

Thus Swamiji established conclusively that Max Müller's conception was inaccurate. Though, one may disagree with him on the Vedas having their origin at the time of creation, one cannot disregard his strong logical interpretation to contradict Max Müller's contrived views.

It is quite stately of Swamiji to acknowledge that the Almighty granted both knowledge and speech at the beginning of the creation which has been reaffirmed by the recent researches related to the development of language (Philology). Though Swamiji believes the origin of Vedic language to be at the beginning of creation, certain linguists forward their claim of an Indo-European language, which is quite debatable.

It is significant to note that both the Western and Indian scholars accord Ṛgveda to be the first text in the world, which goes on to reinforce Swamiji's confirmation. The only difference lies in the fact that Swamiji accords the creation and the existence of Vedic texts to be more than one billion years which conforms to the assessment made by the western scientists regarding the beginning of creation to be around two billion years. Furthermore, Swami Dayanand believed that all the four Vedas were revealed at the same time, and not the Ṛgveda first, followed by the other three.

***Narrative Element***

Swami Dayanand also established the view that the Vedas are entirely devoid of any narratives of the kings, sages, races, and geographical description of any nation. Ironically however, Sāyaṇāchārya and the western scholars that follow him have affirmed the same stance to substantiate irrational and imaginative conjectures, which can be gauged from the following example. Mahīdhara interprets vital species such as *vārāha* (boar) in the *Mayūkha pada* of Yajurveda[34] as the various incarnations of Viṣṇu and explains that lord Viṣṇu is holding the earth in his capacity of various incarnations. The basis of Mahīdhara's reference to the various incarnations of Viṣṇu is pure imagination based on mythology. Sāyaṇāchārya, has tried to establish the validity of these so called mythological incarnations on the basis of his interpretations of 'मयूख' as mountains because there is a reference to Viṣṇu's three steps in the preceding mantra. However, Aurobindo is of the opinion that Sāyaṇa's views not only stamped the mythical misconceptions as valid but also led to the creation of a parallel mythical

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narrative by the west. Maharshi Dayanand refuses to accept the above interpretation of 'मयूख' and reinterprets it as, *Jñānaprakāśādibhirguṇaiḥ raśmibhijvā.*[35]

In *Nighaṇṭu* 1.5, *Mayūkha pada* mentions God. Swami Dayanand establishes his interpretation on this basis and rejects the argument of the mythical narrative or history of races, kings, geographical rivers etc., in the Vedas.

Maharshi Dayanand accords the Vedas to be corroborative, devoid of any deception or falsity. He goes a step further so as to ascertain that the interpretation of the Vedas should be done in a manner as embodied in them, so as to avoid any confusion or misbelief. Even Aurobindo affirms that, "in order to interpret the Vedas we have to begin with the Vedas and depend on its very genesis for its understanding."

***A Summary of Swami Dayanand's Vedic Opinions***

To conclude, let's recount some of Maharshi Dayanand's important declarations regarding the Vedas:

i. The term Veda refers only to the four '*Samhitās*' (the hymn portion) such as the Ṛgveda. Brāhminical texts do not fall under its category.

ii. God revealed the knowledge of the Vedas to four sages: Agni, Vāyu, Āditya and Aṅgira respectively at the beginning of creation.

iii. Therefore, one cannot trace the worldly history of human race in them.

iv. The expounder of the Vedas is 'Brahma' only and all the other references such as *agni* are His significations. However, in some contexts, these terms also have material denotations.

v. Vedas are self-evident (*svataḥ pramāṇa*), whereas other texts are *parataḥ pramāṇa* (dependant on the Vedas).

vi. In the Vedas one can trace all the truths pertaining to the *Vijñāna* (science), *Karma* (action), *Upāsanā* (communion) and *Jñāna* (knowledge of God).

vii. The Vedas are not the books of rituals and *yajñik* ceremonies alone but an embodiment of knowledge on spirituality, politics, science, arts, mathematics, geography, ethics, sociology etc.

viii. The Vedas do not sanction idol worship, polytheism or animal sacrifice in Yajñas.

ix. Everyone has the right to study the Vedas irrespective of caste and gender.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. मन्त्रब्राह्मणयोर्वेदनामधेयम्। Please see Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash,* (Shatabadi edition, ed. Yudhishthira Mimamsaka, 1972), Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Bahalgarh, p. 300, f.n. 2 (Editor).
2. Maharshi Dayanand, 2016 Vikrami, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Vedavisyavicāra,* Arya Sahitya Mandal, Ajmer, p. 115
3. *Śrutismṛtivirodhe tu śrutireva garīyasī.*
   श्रुतिस्मृतिविरोधे तु श्रुतिरेव गरीयसी।
4. Maharshi Dayanand, *op. cit.*, p. 471
5. Lagadha, *Vedāṅga Jyotiṣa, Shloka,* 3;
   वेदाः हि यज्ञार्थमभिप्रवृत्ताः कालानुपूर्व्या विहिताश्च यज्ञाः
6. Maharshi Dayanand, *op. cit.*, p. 471;

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यत्सायणाचार्येण वेदानां परममर्थमविज्ञाय सर्वे वेदाः क्रियाकाण्डतत्पराः सन्तीत्युक्तम्, तदन्यथाऽस्ति। कुतः? तेषां सर्वविद्याऽन्वितत्वात्।

7. *Ibid.*, p. 59;
अत्र चत्वारो वेदविषयाः सन्ति, विज्ञानकर्मोपासनाज्ञानकाण्डभेदात्।
तत्रादिमो विज्ञानविषयो हि सर्वेभ्यो मुख्योऽस्ति।

8. *Ibid.;* तस्य परमेश्वरादारभ्य तृणपर्यन्तपदार्थेषु साक्षाद् बोधान्वयत्वात्।

9. Please see Rishi Dayanand Bhāshya on following mantras : *Yajurveda,* 2.19, 4.9, 4.18, 9.1 18.6-7, 20.36; *Ṛgveda,* 1.24.14, 1.44.2, 2.5.8, 3.2.2, 4.20.2, 4.27.2, 5.43.16, 6.10.6, 6.16.3 etc.

10. *Pūrva Mīmānsā,* 1.2.1; आम्नायस्य क्रियार्थत्वाद् आनर्थक्यमतदर्थानाम्।

11. *Nirukta,* 1.15-16

12. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā,* p. 127;
वेदेषु सर्वा विद्या सन्त्याहोश्विन्नेति?
अत्रोच्यते–सर्वाः सन्ति मूलोद्देशतः।

13. Please see *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā* and Maharshi Dayanand Bhāshya.

14. *Yajurveda,* 6.14;
चरित्रांस्ते शुन्धामि

15. *Ibid.*;
वाचं ते शुन्धामि, चक्षुस्ते शुन्धामि, श्रोत्रं ते शुन्धामि

16. Surender Kumar, 1995, *Samarpan Shatī Saurabham,* Samarpananand Shodh Sansthan, Meerut, p. 35

17. आत्मैवाग्निः। *Śatapatha,* 6.7.1.20;
वागेवाग्निः। *Śatapatha,* 3.2.2.13;
ब्रह्माऽग्निः। *Śatapatha,* 1.3.3.19;
आयुर्वाऽअग्निः। *Śatapatha,* 6.7.3.7;
असौ वा आदित्योऽग्निः शुचिः। *Taitriya,* 1.1.6.2;
संवत्सर एवाग्निः। *Śatapatha,* 10.4.5.2

18. *Nirukta,* 7.15;
ईडिरध्येषणाकर्मा पूजाकर्मा वा।

19. Dayanand, *Ṛgveda Bhāshya,* 1.1.1;
यदा शिल्पिभिरयमग्निर्यन्त्रकलाभिर्यानेषु प्रदीप्यते तदा।

20. *Śatapatha,* 1.4.1.30;
अश्वो ह वा एष भूत्वा देवेभ्यो यज्ञं वहति।

21. *Ṛgveda,* 1.1.1, Dayanand Bhāshya;
वेगादिगुणवन्तमश्वमग्निमीडते कार्य्यार्थमधीच्छन्तीति वेद्यम्

22. *Ibid.*, 1.1.2;
दिव्यानीन्द्रियाणि विद्यादिदिव्यगुणान् दिव्यान् ऋतून् दिव्यान् भोगान्वा।

23. इन्द्रम् विद्युतम् (Dayanand Bhāshya, *Yajurveda,* 28.21);
इन्द्रम् सूर्यम् (*Ibid.*, 28.15);
इन्द्रम् परमविद्यैश्वर्यसम्पन्नम् (*Ibid.*, 28.3);
इन्द्रम् अविद्याविदारकमाप्तं विद्वांसम् (Dayanand Bhāshya, *Ṛgveda,* 7.31.12);
अश्विना वायुसूर्य्यौ (Dayanand Bhāshya, *Yajurveda,* 21.49);
अश्विना शिल्पविद्याध्येत्रध्यापकौ (Dayanand Bhāshya, *Ṛgveda,* 1.89.4);
रुद्रासः वायवः (*Ibid.*, 1.85.2);

24. *Ṛgveda,* 10.121.2

25. *Ibid.*, 1.1.2;
अग्निः पूर्वेभिः

26. *Śatapatha,* 6.7.2;
ज्योतिर्वै हिरण्यं ज्योतिरेषोऽमृतं हिरण्यम्।

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27. ज्योतिरिन्द्राग्नी, *Śatapatha,* 10.4.1.6
एष एवेन्द्रो य एष (सूर्यः) तपति, *Śatapatha,* 1.6.4.18
इन्द्रः सूर्य, *Tāṇḍaya,* 14.2.5
28. *Aitreya Brāhmaṇa,* 7.13;
यशो वै हिरण्यम्।
29. *Śatapatha,* 10.4;
ज्योतिरिन्द्राग्नी।
30. *Ibid.,* 14.7;
ज्योतिरेवायं पुरुष इत्यात्मज्योतिः।
31. *Ibid.,* 7.5.2.8;
प्राणो वै हिरण्यम्।
32. *Ibid.,* 4.3.4.24;
आयुर्हि हिरण्यम्।
33. Maharshi Dayanand, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā,* p. 108
34. *Yajurveda,* 5.16;
व्यस्कभ्ना रोदसी विष्णवेते दाधर्त्थ पृथिवीमभितो मयूखैः।
35. *Ibid.,* Dayanand Bhāshya;
ज्ञानप्रकाशादिभिर्गुणैः रश्मिभिर्वा

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# CHAPTER 4

# The Works of Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati

*Virendra K. Alankar*

Swami Dayanand Saraswati (1824-1883) left home at the age of about twenty-one seeking answers to two questions: Who is the real Shiva? What is the mystery of death? He travelled far and wide for more than fifteen years in the search of truth.[1] Ultimately, on November 14, 1860, he arrived at the cottage of Dandi Swami Virjanand, who propounded that Aṣṭādhyāyī and Mahābhāshya were the only authentic granthas of Vyākaraṇa[2] which could unlock the real meaning of the *śāstras,* which alone could provide him with the answers that he sought. At that time, there was a tradition of studying and teaching *Prakriyā granthas* of grammar. But Swami Virjanand taught Dayanand Saraswati, in less than three years, the whole of Aṣṭādhyāyī and Mahābhāshya following the serial order of the sūtras. Dayanand realised that the real and proper meanings of the Vedas, the Vedāṅgas, the Śāstras and the Upaniṣads could be comprehended only through this *ārṣa* tradition.

Upon the completion of Dayanand's education, Virjanand took a pledge from him to resurrect the *ārṣa* tradition. To fulfil his commitment, Dayanand struggled hard, suffered stiff opposition and paid with his life. He propagated his thoughts through elocution, discussions and writing, attaining full physical, mental and intellectual maturity and preparedness. He wrote about 20,000 foolscap pages which exceed the writings of any Hindi literary figure of his times. His vast and multi-faceted writings may be classified as follows:

1. Siddhānta grantha (Satyarth Prakash)
2. Vedabhāshya granthas
3. Ritualistic granthas
4. Vyākaraṇa granthas
5. Philosophical writings

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6. Matamatāntar Khaṇḍan literature
7. Miscellaneous writings
8. Patra and Vijñāpanas

## SIDDHĀNTA GRANTHA - SATYARTH PRAKASH

Dayanand expressed, in Satyarth Prakash, the truth for which he had left his home. This treatise does not belong to any sect or religion. He has focused his attention only on inherent meanings of truth. However, Swamiji did not hesitate to criticise the untruth in the books of other sects.

***First Edition of Satyarth Prakash***

Swamiji had come to Kashi in May 1874. The Deputy Collector of Kashi, Raja Jaikrishna Das, who was his devotee, requested him to compile his essential teachings and thoughts in a book form, for the benefit of the people and for a record of the preachings for posterity. The Raja offered to bear the expenses of the publication. Swamiji accepted the suggestion and started dictating the book to a Maharashtrian Pandit, Chandra Shekhar, on Friday, June 12, 1874.[3] The script-writer was engaged by the Raja for the Swami. In three and a half months, the dictation of all the fourteen chapters of the book was complete.

Two copies of the manuscript were prepared. The first copy is not available today but the other was preserved by the Raja's family at Muradabad. This original copy and its photocopies are available with Paropkarini Sabha, Ajmer. One thousand copies of Satyarth Prakash were published in 1875 by Raja Jaikrishna Das.

Some important facts about the first edition of Satyarth Prakash are as under:

1. This book had no introduction or preface and just begins with the word 'अथ' *atha.*
2. It contained a number of mistakes in script-writing as well as in printing.
3. Swamiji could not check the proof of Satyarth Prakash himself. Therefore, the book contained mistakes and interpolations.
4. In the first edition, the Pandit who took the dictation from Swamiji, made interpolations on many subjects like *Shrāddha* of the dead, eating meat, killing of animals in *yajña* etc. There is a possibility that Raja Jaikrishna Das had a hand in this change of the text of Satyarth Prakash.[4]
5. Till 1874, the form of Hindi prose had not been standardised. By writing this book in Hindi prose, Swamiji undertook an amazing task. By that time, he did not have much fluency in Hindi. His mother tongue was Gujarati and he himself was basically a Sanskrit scholar. Consequently, the use of gender in his Hindi is mostly as per Sanskrit and Gujarati Vyākaraṇa.[5]
6. This first edition with interpolations continued to be sold. Swamiji came to know about the interpolations only much later. Then he published on the front page of the first and second numbers (in *Shrāvaṇa* and *Bhādrapada* Samvat 1934) of Ṛgvedabhāshya and Yajurvedabhāshya that "It be known to all that I abide by whatever is there in accordance with the Vedas, and I do not accept anything

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against the Vedas... Whatever got published about *Tarpaṇa* and *Shrāddha* that is due to the mistake committed by the script-writer."[6] Due to the very busy schedule of Swamiji, its republication was somewhat delayed.

7. This edition contained only the first 12 of the 14 chapters called samullasas. The reason for non-publication of the 13th and 14th chapters was either the immediacy of publication or the personal compulsions of Raja Jaikrishna Das,[7] but there is no doubt that both these chapters were dictated along with the first 12 chapters. This is evident from the letter written to Lala Harivansh Lal by Swami Dayanand[8] on January 23, 1875 and in the advertisement (of the same year).

***Second (Revised) Edition of Satyarth Prakash***

The first edition had almost been sold by 1880. Full precautions were taken in the preparation of the second edition. Swamiji got it written through his dictation and then he revised it himself. From the revised script, the script-writers prepared the second script. Both the scripts are available as such, with the Paropkarini Sabha, Ajmer. Swamiji had completed the revision of Satyarth Prakash by August 29, 1882 and had started sending it to the press. The press-copy up to the 13th chapter had been sent to the press a month before the sad demise of the Rishi.[9] So, Swamiji had completed the fourteen chapters and had also written *Swamantavyāmantavyaprakāsh.* The date Vikrami Samvat 1939 Bhādrapada Shukla (latter half of September 1882) is printed at the end of the introduction.

The first ten chapters form the first half while the last four chapters form the second half of Satyarth Prakash. In the first half, many philosophical and social issues have been discussed in a lucid and interesting manner. These include topics like the explanation of the different names of God, child education, ghosts and goblins, the horoscope, study and teaching, *prāṇāyām, Śikṣā, Sandhyā-Agnihotra, yajñapātra, Brahmacharya, Samāvartana,* marriage, *varṇa-vyavasthā, gṛhastha* dharma, the features of a foolish and a wise person, the Vānaprastha and the Sannyāsa vidhi, *Rājadharma, Brahma-vidyā,* the existence and form of God, the negation of incarnation, the difference between *jīva* and *Īśvara,* the origin of the universe, *vidyā-avidyā, bandha-mokṣa, āchāra-anāchāra,* the *bhaksya-abhaksya* etc. In these ten chapters of the first half, Swamiji seems to be having a direct communication with his readers in a comprehensive style like the Acharyas of the Upaniṣads. In the 11th chapter, there is a logical criticism of different sects prevailing in India. In the 12th chapter, the views of Chārvākas, Buddhists and Jains, and in the 13th chapter, those of the Christians and in the 14th chapter, the views of Muslims, have been discussed.

Satyarth Prakash pleads that everyone has equal right to progress in life. Swamiji has outlined his objectives for writing Satyarth Prakash in the introduction as well as in the sub-introductions, the use of which is perhaps not found elsewhere. Swamiji did not have a rich library at his disposal. He kept with him, only the books which he had himself collected painstakingly. Despite that, he has quoted references and given evidences from hundreds of books like Vedas, Brāhmaṇas, Upaniṣads, books on Philosophy, Smṛti literature, Purāṇas, Vedāṅga literature, Bible, Qur'ān etc.[10]

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Satyarth Prakash played a pivotal role in preparing the background for freedom of India. Indian freedom-fighter Vir Savarkar, has mentioned in his memoirs that Satyarth Prakash was the most readable book in the cellular jail. In fact the book helped Indians gain a sense of self-respect.

The role of Satyarth Prakash has been quite significant, also in the popularisation of Hindi. The simple and spontaneous language of Satyarth Prakash[11] and its question-answer form made it popular not only among the scholars as well as lay public. It also drew people to Hindi. Furthermore, a large number of books were written for and against Satyarth Prakash. No other book in Hindi was so much commented upon. Swamiji and his followers gave a suitable reply to every book written against it. Right from *Dayanand Timir Bhāskar* by Jwala Prasad Misra in 1898 to *Satyarth Prakash Vimarsh* by Dr. Ram Prakash in 2006, at least seventy-five such books are still available.[12] Satyarth Prakash has been translated into at least twenty-two Indian and foreign languages. Rational thoughts and open-minded discussions on the universal human issues have made the book relevant for all times to come.

## VEDABHĀSHYA GRANTHAS

Swami Dayanand had realised that ignorance about the true meaning of the Vedas was the root cause of ignorance, hypocrisy, inequality, exploitation and discrimination. So, Swamiji decided to write a commentary on the Vedas, in addition to Satyarth Prakash.

### *Two Samples of Vedabhāshya*

Swamiji got the commentary of the first sūkta of Ṛgveda published from the Vedic Yantralaya in Samvat 1933 (i.e. 1876) as a sample to demonstrate the style he was to adopt in his path-breaking Vedic commentary. This commentary also included the Gujarati and Marathi translations. He circulated it among the prominent scholars and Pandits such as Bal Shastri, Swami Vishuddhanand Saraswati etc., for the sake of consensus. He expressed *bhautika* and *pārmārthika* meanings of the first mantra of Ṛgveda i.e. *Agnimīle purohitam.* This sample of Vedabhāshya was prepared in Kārtika Samvat 1931 (October 1874) at Mumbai and it was perhaps published in Samvat 1932 (1875) or even earlier than that. Its cost was one *Ānnā* (one sixteenth of a rupee) only.[13]

The second sample of the Vedabhāshya was published in *Pauṣa* Samvat 1933 (December 1876) from Lajras press, Kashi. It consists of the first sūkta of the first mandal of Ṛgveda and some Sanskrit Bhāshya of the first mantra of the second sūkta.

### *Bhrāntinivāraṇa*

Mahesh Chandra Nyayaratna, Principal of Sanskrit College Calcutta published certain objections to Swamiji's sample of the Vedabhāshya. Swamiji answered all the objections in *Bhrāntinivāraṇa* written in Kārtika 1934 Vikrami (October-November 1877).

### *Āryābhivinaya*

This book, written in Samvat 1932 (1875), is also a sample of Vedabhāshya by Swamiji. It contains a collection and commentary of 108 devotional mantras from Ṛgveda and

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Yajurveda. He signifies the mantras being *Stuti* and *Prārthanā* content of prayer expressed therein. He emphasised the significance of *jñāna, karma* and *upāsanā*; and that none of these is complete in itself, as the three together, comprise *Bhakti Mārg* to achieve salvation. The book contained references that provided inspiration to achieve the nation's freedom.

***Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā***

Before the Vedabhāshya, Swamiji wrote an introduction to methodology of the commentary on all the four Vedas. This introduction commenced on August 20, 1876 at Ayodhya, was completed about three months later at Bareilly. Its first edition was published in Chaitra Samvat 1934 (March 1877) from Lajras Press, Kashi. The combined 15th and 16th issues were published in Vaishākha Samvat 1935 (April 1878) from Nirnaya Sagar Press, Bombay.[14]

The Sanskrit part of Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā was composed by Rishi Dayanand and its Hindi was done by some Pandits. Therefore, only the original Sanskrit part is fully authentic. In Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, as many as thirty-five subjects have been discussed in the context of methodology, by virtue of which, it has become a monumental work by itself. The subjects discussed are as under:

(1) Prayer to God, (2) The Origin of the Vedas, (3) The Perpetuity of the Vedas, (4) The Contents of the Vedas, (5) The Terminology of the Vedas, (6) Theosophy (Brahma-vidyā), (7) Dharma as Ordained in the Vedas, (8) Cosmogony, (9) The Revolution and Rotation of the Earth and other Planets, (10) Gravitation and Attraction, (11) The Illuminator and the Illuminated, (12) The Science of Mathematics, (13) Praise, Prayer and worship of God, supplication to Him and resignation to His will, (14) Worship, (15) Emancipation, (16) The art of Building Ships and Aerial Vehicles, (17) The Science of Telegraphy, (18) Medicinal Sciences, (19) Re-birth, (20) Marriage, (21) The *Niyoga* (appointment), (22) The Duties of the Ruler and the Ruled, (23) The *Varṇas* and the *Āśramas*, (24) The Five Great Duties (*Pañcamahāyajñas*), (25) The Authoritativeness or Otherwise of the Books, (26) Eligibility and Non-eligibility, (27) The Method of Studying and Teaching the Vedas, (28) Clearing Doubts against Projected Bhāshya, (29) General Principles, (30) A Few Questions and Answers, (31) Some Peculiarities of the Vedic Words, (32) Rules about *Svaras*, (33) General Grammatical Rules, (34) Figures of Speech, and (35) Abbreviations used in the Commentary.

Almost all Vedic works and other scriptural and philosophical treatises in Sanskrit have been quoted in this work. It contains more than one thousand citations from all spheres of Sanskrit literature, including three hundred verses from the Vedas.[15]

In this book, Swamiji has successfully propounded the Vedas as the ultimate root of all types of knowledge. None other than Dayanand has presented the Vedic knowledge so profoundly on such a diversity of subjects like science, medical science, mathematics, Jyotiṣa (astronomy) and navigation etc. Studying Dayanand in the context of Indian sciences, J.T.F. Jordens has said:

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> The Vedas, as expression of the wisdom of God, are universal also in another sense, they contain at least in germinal form, the totality of knowledge. That means that we can find in them not only answers to our questions about God and about the religious duties and destiny of mankind, we can also find a blueprint of the perfect society and the ideal state. Moreover, they were also the repository of scientific truth, containing the seeds of the manifold scientific principles which lie at the basis of both science and technology.[16]

Many contemporary scholars have contested unsuccessfully, the translation of the Vedas by Swami Dayanand. Now, not only the modern thinkers but also the Paurāṇic Pandits are doing serious research following Dayanand's methodology on subjects like Science, Mathematics, *Rājdharma* (Polity), Poetic elements, Ayurveda etc. in the Vedas. Swamiji has also pointed out the mistakes committed by Sāyaṇa, Mahīdhara etc. in comprehending the meaning of the Vedas. The mystic meaning of the Vedas can be expounded only when these mantras are explained with the *Yaugika paddhati*; failing which Mahīdhara and others have given distorted and even sexual meanings of the Vedic mantras.[17]

It is a solemn declaration of Rishi Dayanand that the meanings of the hymns could be explored only by the ancient way of explanation adopted by the ancient seers:[18] Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā works like a guide to comprehend the meaning of the Vedas. Therefore, Swamiji directed that Vedic commentary (*Vedabhāshya*) should not be given to any one without Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, whereas the latter could be sold alone to anyone. This book has been translated in several languages including Urdu, English, Marathi, and Gujarati.

***Ṛgvedabhāshya***

After Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Swamiji started writing Ṛgvedabhāshya on Mārgaśīrṣa Shukla 6, Samvat, 1934 (Tuesday, December 11, 1877). The printing of Ṛgveda Bhāshya began in Shrāvaṇa Samvat 1935 (August 1878) from Nirnaya Sagar Press, Bombay in the form of monthly issues, of which only thirteen could be published. The remaining part (up to Ṛgveda, 1.86.5) was published from Vedic Yantralaya. During the life-time of Swamiji, only 51 issues were published. The remaining Bhāshya was published in monthly issues up to Samvat 1956 (1899) i.e., over twenty-two years.[19] Swamiji could finish this Bhāshya of Ṛgveda only up to 7.61.2.

***Yajurvedabhāshya***

The Ṛgveda Bhāshya was not yet complete when Swamiji started writing the Yajurveda Bhāshya on Paush Shukla 13, Samvat 1934 (Thursday, January 17, 1878). Gopal Rao Hari Deshmukh had requested him to do so, in his letter dated May 30, 1877.[20] The whole Yajurveda Bhāshya was published in 117 issues. The first 13 issues were published from Nirnaya Sagar Press, Bombay and the remaining from Vedic Yantralaya. This publication began in Samvat 1934 (1877) and its 117th and the last instalment was published after about 12 years in Shrāvaṇa Shukla Samvat 1946 (1889). In the life time

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of Swamiji, only 51 issues (up to Yajurveda 15.11) were published and the remaining Bhāshya was published after his death.

It needs to be mentioned here that Swamiji's objective was not to just give the literal meaning of the words of the Vedas. In his Bhāshyas of Ṛgveda and Yajurveda, there is a point of view, coherence, non-contradiction, and above all is one purport (or substance). Pregnant with the evidences from the Brāhmaṇa treatises, the Vyākaraṇa Shāstra (of Pāṇini etc.), the Pratiśākhyas and the Nirukta, these Bhāshyas are an incomparable contribution of Rishi Dayanand to the Vedic world. The impact of his Vedabhāshya was such, that the scholars hitherto confined to the gods and goddesses in the Purāṇas, now came out of the Purāṇic world and began to ponder upon the Vedas and other Vedic treatises. Although they were pre-committed, and they repudiated the views of Dayanand, yet a new thought process was initiated about the meaning of the Vedas and other religious verses. Today, the whole Sanskrit world is looking towards the Vedas and Shāstras and the credit for all this goes to Rishi Dayanand. Those who were once his critics, are now treading the path shown by him and are looking for references of life, welfare of the world and physical sciences in the Vedas (of course without naming Swamiji). The view point of the scholars has certainly centred on the Vedas, though it is both for as well as against the Vedabhāshya of Dayanand. Some characteristics of Dayanand Bhāshya are as under:

1. The objective of Veda is not restricted only to *yajña*. In fact, four main subjects of the Vedas are: knowledge (ज्ञान), action (कर्म), meditation (उपासना) and science (विज्ञान).
2. From the style of Dayanand, it is easily understood that the Veda does not contain any *laukika* history, and instead contains *Akhyāna*, the eternal history. *Akhyāna* is a style of expression of thoughts.
3. There is no magic, witch-craft, superstitions or vulgarity in the Vedas as has been presented by Mahīdhara, Bloomfield etc. The Vedas are the source of cosmic knowledge and are *Āchārashāstra* (the scriptures that can guide human action).
4. Veda propounds one God. There is a logical solution to the whirlpool of polytheism in Dayanand Bhāshya.
5. Swamiji has used etymology (निर्वचन शास्त्र or Nirukta) in his Vedabhāshya. The derivations of Swamiji are so logical that the Nairuktas and grammarians have to bow their heads before his commendable scholarship. For example, the meaning of the Veda is God too. See this derivation of Veda – *Vetti carācaram jagat sa jagadīśvaraḥ, vidanti vā yena sa vedaḥ.*[21]
6. There is not only *Brahma-vijñāna* in the Vedabhāshya of Swamiji, but *lokavidyās* as well. Therefore, the spiritual, the physical and the ritualistic meanings are also perceived by the researcher.
7. The Vedas contain poetic exuberance too. Swamiji has exhibited the beauty of Vedic poetry with the beautiful usage of meters and figures of speech.
8. Swamiji also holds forth on the grammar, wherever needed. Swamiji had an extraordinary command over Vyākaraṇa shāstra. That is why in the Gāyatrī mantra (Ṛgveda 3.62.10 and Yajurveda 30.2), Swamiji gives the meaning of *dhīmahi* (धीमहि)

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as *dadhīmahi* (दधीमहि) and *dharema* (धरेम), whereas Sāyaṇa defines it as *dhyāyāmaḥ* (ध्यायामः).

9. The meaning of *devatā* is the subject to be elucidated in any Veda mantra *Yatkāma ṛṣiryasyāṁ devatāyāmārthapatyamicchan stutiṁ prayuṅkte taddaivataḥ sa mantro bhavati.*[22] This statement is the basis of Dayanand Bhāshya.
10. After mantra bhāshya, Swamiji gives its explanation also. In his explanation, Swamiji has depicted the subject-matter of the mantra and its purport.
11. There is neither inner conflict nor self-contradiction in the Dayanand Bhāshya. *Prakaraṇaśa eva tu (mantrā) nirvaktavyāḥ*[23] Swamiji has fully endorsed this principle. By this, many mysteries have been unravelled and many questions and problems have found a proper solution.

The commentaries on Ṛgveda and Yajurveda by Swamiji are in Sanskrit and Hindi. The Sanskrit commentary has been composed by Swamiji. The Hindi translation was done by Pandits which may not be in line with the Sanskrit Bhāshya at some places.

## RITUALISTIC GRANTHAS

The subject of Veda is *yajña* too. The analysis of this *yajñavidyā* has been given in the ritualistic treatise Kalpashāstra. But the main problem in the proper understanding of any Gṛhyasūtras or Śrautsūtra lies in deciding as to which parts should be considered original and which as interpolations. Even the commentators have no solution. The other problem is that after studying any ritualistic treatise, the elaboration of principles concerning any *yajña, sanskār* or *anusṭhāna* may be understood, but it is not possible to learn the procedure of systematic performance of *yajña.* Though there is Ritualistic science in Śrautsūtras or Gṛhyasūtras, yet nobody can organise any *sanskār* and *yajñavidhi* by studying any such book, as there is a lack of full procedural description of performance of *yajña.* In the Vedic tradition, performance of *yajña* was quite common. The scholars were supposed to know the methodology of performing and organising a *yajña.* Therefore the sūtra-writers did not consider it necessary to describe the details, and the Acharyas thought it apt to highlight only the special rituals, their uses and procedure. By the time Dayanand entered the arena, the tradition of *yajña* was not only broken but also corrupted. The *yajñas* were now being performed only using simple shlokas. Some self-styled Acharyas concocted their own *yajñas* in the medieval period. A few such *yajñas* like *Shatachaṇḍī* etc. are prevalent even today which are not in conformity with the Veda, and find no mention in any authentic Vedic treatise.

On the basis of ritualistic literature, Dayanand gave a systematic form of *yajñas* and ceremonies. He was the first ritualist of the present age. There is much simplicity and brevity in his *yajñika* forms. In addition to this, he put an end to the essentiality of the presence of Purohit in the daily *yajñas.* Dayanand gave the right to perform *yajña* to every human being. In Dayanand's Kalpa literature, the hereditary Purohitism met with its end. Any person - male, female or a mature child can perform the *yajña.*

The ritualistic treatises written by Swamiji, are as under:

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***Sandhyā***

A rather small book named *Sandhyā* was written by Swamiji in Vikrami Samvat 1920 (1863). It was published by Jwala Prakash Press, Agra. It was the first work of Swamiji, but is unfortunately now unavailable.

***Pañcamahāyajñavidhi***

This book of rituals was written by Swamiji during his stay at Bombay. In this, he explained a systematic procedure of five daily *yajñas* in a serial order as per the Dharmshāstras. The book was completed on Ashwin Shukla Pratipada 1931 (Sunday October, 1874), and was published from Bombay. It got sold in no time. Its revised edition was published from Kashi in Vikrami Samvat 1934 (1877). It deals with the form and conduct of *Brahmayajña, Devayajña, Pitryajña, Bhutayajña* and *Atithiyajña.* In the whole process, the mantras and *Brāhmaṇavākyās* are used as evidence. The procedures advised by Dayanand are practical as well as scientific. Such systematic forms of daily *yajñas* are not to be seen before Dayanand. In addition to the Bombay and Kashi editions, three more editions were published in the name of Swamiji, which were counterfeits and incorrect. These editions, contain mentions of *Shrāddha* and *Tarpaṇa* etc. which are obvious interpolations.

***Sanskārvidhi***

The writing of Sanskārvidhi started on Kārtika Amāvasya Samvat 1932 (Saturday, October 28, 1875) and was completed in one month and eight days on *Pauṣa* Shukla 7, Samvat 1932 (January 14, 1875). Its first edition was published at the end of the Samvat 1933 (March 1876) from Asiatic Press, Bombay. The utility of Sanskārs has been evaluated much in Smriti and Kalpa literature, but the systematic order of their procedures has often remained dubious. In Gṛhyasūtras, there is neither a uniformity in the number of Sanskārs, nor the similitude of the mantra *viniyogas* and the procedure. There is also no uniformity in the names of Sanskārs in Gṛhyasūtras and Smritis. Dayanand gave a judicious solution to this problem. He exhibited the complete procedure and utility of highly useful sixteen Sanskārs covering all the Kalpashāstras and Dharmshāstras. His Sanskārvidhi lent uniformity and simplicity to our understanding of the Sanskārs. This is a great research work done by Rishi Dayanand, based on evidence and logic. By giving a systematic form to sixteen Sanskārs, the Sanskārvidhi has emerged as a Kalpa treatise by itself. The impact of Sanskārvidhi was so great that today Paurāṇic Pandits too do not talk of twelve or fourteen Sanskārs, but have been forced to accept the sixteen Sanskārs.

In Gṛhyasūtras such actions (*karma*) have been mentioned which are ethically and morally beyond acceptance. Even their utility is dubious. For example, in *Annaprāśana Sanskār* the rule of eating the flesh (mānsa) of birds has been mentioned. Swami Dayanand Saraswati countered this convincingly. Had the *Mānsavidhi* been Vedic, he argued, this Sanskār would have been named as *Mansaprāśan Sanskār* and not *Annaprāśana Sanskār.*

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In Sanskārvidhi, right from common *agnihotra* to the *Antyeṣṭiprakaraṇa*, every type of information regarding the procedure is available. The purpose of agnihotra in Sanskārs is indicated in the Sanskārvidhi. Furthermore, many new explanations are found in the Sanskārvidhi for the first time. For example, Rishi Dayanand has placed the male and the female at par and *Punsavana* has not been considered as the Sanskār of attaining a son. He has given grammatically correct explanation and has said that this Sanskār is meant for the preservation of *purushatva*. He is of the view that the time of the *Punsavana* Sanskār is in the second or third month of the knowledge of impregnation. This Sanskār should be performed at that very time so as to gain *purushatva* or semen. Till two months after the birth of a child, the man should observe celibacy and see to it that the semen does not fall even in the dream. In the same way, in Vivāha Sanskār, by making the bride chant the Veda mantras, he has cleared the obstacles in the way of the females to study the Vedas. Every form of the Sanskārs has been authenticated by quoting the Vedas, Āśvalāyaṇa Gṛhyasūtra, Pāraskar Gṛhyasūtra, Gobhila Gṛhyasūtra, Śaunak Gṛhyasūtra, Brāhmaṇa treatises, Smṛties and Upaniṣadas etc.

According to J.T.F. Jordens, "Sanskārvidhi is an admirably organised handbook which is totally self-explanatory and makes it possible for any intelligent Arya to perform the ceremonies."[24]

## VYĀKARAṆA GRANTHAS

Guru Virjanand was himself a learned scholar of Kaumudī, but he had realised that true wisdom and scholarship could be attained only by studying the *ārṣa granthas* written by rishis. So he taught Aṣṭādhyāyī to his disciples, while at that time most of the study was being done through *Siddhānta Kaumudī*. Dayanand Saraswati demonstrated the importance of the Aṣṭādhyāyī tradition. He has, to his credit, two books on grammar:

***Aṣṭādhyāyī Bhāshya***

Rishi Dayanand had an intense desire to teach and propagate Aṣṭādhyāyī among the future generations. He wanted to inculcate a school of thought with Aṣṭādhyāyī as an essential constituent of curriculum of studies in Sanskrit language. However, Swamiji did not have enough time to open and run any Gurukulas. Nevertheless, despite his busy schedule, he established Sanskrit Pāthashālās at Farrukhabad, Kasganj, Chhalesar, Kashi and Mirjapur, and continued propagating the study and teaching of Aṣṭādhyāyī. He started writing a commentary on Aṣṭādhyāyī while moving from place to place, delivering lectures on the Vedas. The commentary on four chapters of Aṣṭādhyāyī written by Swamiji was published by the Paropkarini Sabha, Ajmer. This easy-to-learn commentary was written in Samvat 1935-36.

This endeavour of Dayanand Saraswati attracted the scholars towards Aṣṭādhyāyī. Many Arya Samajist scholars further advanced its study. Today, in many Gurukulas, Sanskrit grammar is taught in this (*ārṣa*) tradition only.

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***Vedāṅga Prakāsh***

Guiding the people, away from the *anārṣa* treatises of grammar like Siddhānta Kaumudī, was a challenge before Swamiji. So he decided to write a book on the pattern of that tradition. For those, who wanted a preliminary knowledge of Sanskrit, Swamiji published a series of grammar books named as Vedāṅga Prakāsh on the suggestion of Bhakta Krishna Chandra and Lala Gopichand, the residents of Rawalpindi.

The fourteen books included in the series named '*Vedāṅga Prakāsh*', are as follows:

(i) *Varṇoccāraṇa Śikṣā* i.e. Orthoepy – Swamiji researched and made available this *Pāṇinīya Sūtrātmaka Śikṣā Grantha.* It was written with a simple Hindi translation on Māgha Shukla chaturthi, Vikrami Samvat 1936 (Sunday, January 26, 1879) and published from Kashi at the end of Samvat 1936 (1879), (ii) *Sandhi Viṣaya* i.e. Coalescence of letters and orthography, published in Vikrami Samvat 1937 (i.e. 1880), (iii) *Nāmika* i.e. Declension (Chaitra Shukla 14 Samvat 1938 corresponding to Wednesday, April 13, 1881), (iv) *Kārakīya* i.e. Cases (Bhādrapada Krishna 8, Samvat 1938, i.e. Tuesday, August 16, 1881), (v) *Sāmāsika* i.e. Compound words (Bhādrapada Krishna 12, Samvat 1938, i.e. Sunday, August 21, 1881), (vi) *Satraiṇa Tādhita* i.e. Genders (Mārgaśirṣa Shukla 5, Samvat 1936, i.e. Wednesday, December 17, 1879), (vii) *Avyayārtha* i.e. Indeclinables (Māgha Shukla 10, Samvat 1939, i.e. Friday, February 16, 1883), (viii) *Ākhyātika* i.e. The verb (*Pauṣa* Krishna 11, Samvat 1938, i.e. Saturday, December 17, 1881), (ix) *Sauvara* i.e. Accentuation and Prosody (Bhādrapada Shukla 13, Samvat 1939, i.e. Monday, September 25, 1882), (x) *Pāribhāṣika* i.e. Technicalities (Samvat 1939 i.e. 1882), (xi) *Dhātupāṭha* i.e. verbal roots (Pauṣa Krishna 10, Samvat 1939, i.e. January 3, 1883). It is an original book written by Pāṇini, (xii) *Gaṇapāṭha* i.e. Conjugation (Māgha Shukla 10, Vikrami 1938, i.e. Saturday, January 28, 1882). This is also an original book written by Pāṇini, (xiii) *Uṇādi-kośa* i.e. Word-making (Māgha Krishna Pratipadā, Samvat 1939, i.e. Wednesday, January 24, 1883). Explanation of Uṇādi Sūtras in simple language, and (xiv) *Nighaṇṭu.* Swamiji published it after checking the original text of this Vedic Kosha with other manuscripts also. Swamiji considers it to be the composition of Yāska.

These books show the different ways in which the grammar of Vedic Sanskrit and that of ordinary Sanskrit deals with various grammatical matters. Number (i) to (v) and (xiii) contain expositions of Pāṇini's *Dhātupāṭha,* (vi) to (ix) those of various sūtras of Aṣṭādhyāyī in Hindi. Number (xii) is a Sanskrit commentary on Pāṇini's *Uṇādi Sūtras,* (vi) is a glossary of terms used in Pāṇini's grammar and number (x, xi) and (xiv) are merely reprints of certain useful parts of Pāṇini's Aṣṭādhyāyī.[25]

It cannot be ascertained whether Swamiji wrote these books himself or got them written by other scholars giving them his directions. After studying Siddhānta Kaumudī, the reader does not like to study Aṣṭādhyāyī. However, after studying *Nāmika, Ākhyātika* etc. (included in Vedāṅga Prakash), the reader is inclined towards the study of Aṣṭādhyāyī though it is a *Prakriyā* book. What is the reason behind this? That is a matter for the scholars to think about.

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## PHILOSOPHICAL WRITINGS

Through his writings and shāstrārthas, Swami Dayanand Saraswati emerges as a great Acharya of Philosophy. He did not author an independent book on Ṣaḍ-darśanam' (the six Vedic philosophies), but in Satyarth Prakash and Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, he has explained in an original way, many of their sūtras with reference to the context. Swamiji has explained lucidly in his writings, 17 sūtras of Sāmkhya, 69 of Yogadarśana, 24 of Nyāya, 49 of Vaiśeṣika, 5 of Mīmānsā and 21 sūtras of Vedānta. Swamiji also conducted a serious criticism of the non-Vedic philosophies of Chārvākas, Buddhists and Jains.

Dayanand did not establish any new philosophical order, because in his vision, Veda alone is the supreme and self-evident truth. Swamiji initially agreed with Shāṅkara Vedānta, but later became a *Traitavādī* philosopher. After studying the four Vedas and six shāstras, he arrived at the conclusion that three entities are *anādi* (without beginning and without end) – *Īśvara* (God), *jīva* (soul) and *prakṛti* (material cause of the universe). His deep understanding of philosophy can be gauged merely from the fact that, like other sectarian Vedic commentators, he did not criticise other *Shāstras.* Shankarāchārya, for establishing his school of thought, may have shown his disagreement with the principles of Indian theistic Darśanas while criticising Buddhism, but in the tradition of Indian scholars, Dayanand was the first person to pronounce the logical coherence between all the six Darśanas. It was a unique vision of Dayanand to behold in its totality all the six theistic philosophical orders. Swamiji has beautifully investigated the coherence between the six shāstras in Satyarth Prakash as under:

> **Question:** Even the Shāstras written by Rishis contain truth mixed with untruth, and contradict one another like other books. Take for example, the subject of *Creation.* Now all the six Shāstras contradict one another on this subject. The Mīmānsā, for instance, gives application as the cause of the world; the Vaiśeṣika, time; the Nyāya, atoms; the Yoga, activity; the Sāmkhya, primeval matter, and the Vedānta, God. Are not their teachings mutually contradictory?
> **Answer:** Firstly, barring the Vedānta and the Sāmkhya, these shāstras do not deal with the subject of *Creation* directly. It is only indirectly mentioned. Secondly, there is no contradiction in their teachings....

Discussing the subject further, Swamiji says:

> As in the case of one science, its different branches are treated separately, so are the six branches of the *Science of Creation* which have been treated separately in the six Shāstras. You can never call it a contradiction, can you? Just as six different causes take part in the formation of a pot, *viz.*, application, time, clay, intellect, labour (required for mixing or separating different materials), the properties of matter, and the potter, similarly six different causes of the world have been discussed by the six Shāstras, thus application by the Mīmānsā, Time by the Vaiśeṣika, material cause by the Nyāya, Divine activity by Yoga, atoms and the gradual formation of the different substances of the world out of them by

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the Sāmkhya and the efficient cause God by the Vedānta. There is no contradiction in it.[26]

Swamiji was a scholarly commentator of Indian philosophy. He placed on record, the books of the *rishis* or the commentaries written by them, as authentic.[27] In the second tenet of Arya Samaj, the form and attributes of God conveyed by Dayanand, provide an understanding of the deep meaning of *Muṇḍakopaniṣad* and *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad.*

Here is an account of the philosophical writings of Swamiji:

***Advaita-mata-khaṇḍana (Refutation of the Advaita Philosophy)***

A refutation of Shāṅkara Vedānta, it was published in Samvat 1927 (1870). Famous Hindi writer Bhartendu Harishchandra got it printed along with the Hindi translation in his *Kavi Vachan Sudhā* (part I, number 14, 15).

***Vedāntidhvāntanivāraṇa***

Another refutation of Shāṅkara Vedānta, this booklet was written in two days at Mumbai in Kārtika Samvat 1931 (November 1874). The first edition of the booklet was published by Oriental Press, Bombay.

***Veda-viruddha-matakhaṇḍana***

In this short book, Swamiji has logically examined the Vallabha sect. Written in Sanskrit, it was published with a Gujarati translation by Shyamji Krishnavarma, a disciple of Swamiji. In later editions, it continued to be published with a Hindi translation. It was completed on Kārtika Amāvasyā, Samvat 1931 (Sunday, November 8, 1874), and was published by the end of Māgha Samvat 1931 (January 1874).

***Svamantvyāmantavyaprakāsh***

Given at the end of Satyarth Prakash, it contains 51 points. It may be termed as a brief introduction to Dayanand Darśana. Swamiji has defined *Īśvara, jīva, prakṛti, sṛṣṭi,* the purpose of creation, *bandh* and *mukti* etc. in a brief and lucid manner.

***Āryoddeshyaratnamālā***

This book was completed on Shrāvaṇa Shukla Saptami, Samvat 1934 (Wednesday, August 15, 1877). It comprises 100 selected ideological thoughts and provides another introduction to Dayanand's philosophy. Many philosophical subjects like *Īśvara, dharma, adharma, puṇya,* sins, birth, death, hell, heaven, *stuti, prārthanā, upāsanā, karma,* means of salvation, Creation, the form of *Anādi, puruṣārtha,* eight kind of evidences etc. have been defined, with great clarity.

## MATAMATĀNTARA KHAṆḌANA GRANTHAS

Rishi Dayanand begins the explanation of Dharma with संगच्छध्वम् संवदध्वम्.[28] Although he tried his best to resolve the differences among the various sects (*Matmatāntra*)

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through dialogue, he did not shy away from condemning their major shortcomings, in his speeches and writings.

***Bhramocchedana and Anubhramocchedana***

The objections to Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā raised by Shivprasad Sitar-e-Hind under the title *Nivedana* have been answered by Swamiji in *Bhramocchedana.* It was completed on Jyeṣṭha Krishna 2, Samvat 1937 (May 25, 1880), and published from Farrukhabad. *Bhramocchedana* was sent to Shivaprasad Sitar-e-Hind as a reply to his objections. Raja Shivaprasad, in reply to *Bhramocchedana,* published a book named *Dvitīya Nivedana* meaning the Second Rejoinder in reply to which the *Anubhramocchedana* book was written in Phalguna Samvat 1937 (1880).

***Shikshāpatrīdhwāntanivāraṇa***

Swami Narayana sect was quite popular in Gujarat. Swamiji gave many lectures, refuting the teachings of this sect during his stay in Gujarat. *Shikshāpatrī-dhwāntanivāraṇa,* written in Sanskrit, was completed on Pauṣa Badi 11, Samvat 1931 (Sunday, January 3, 1875). In it, Swamiji has refuted the *Shikshāpatrī* of Swami Sahajanand, the exponent of Swami Narayana sect. It was published in 1876 from Oriental Press, Bombay with a Gujarati translation by Pandit Shyamji Krishnavarma.

***Bhāgavata Khaṇḍanam (or Vaiṣṇava-mata-khaṇḍana)***

It is a criticism of Shrīmadbhāgavata Purāṇa, originally written in Sanskrit in 1866 (Samvat 1923) and published from Jwalaprakash Press, Agra. The book was unavailable for many decades till Yudhishthira Mimamsaka's found a book named *Pākhaṇḍī-mukhmardan* by Vishveshvaranath Goswami, written to refute Swamiji's *Bhāgavata Khaṇḍanam,* from which Mimamsakaji extracted every line of the original book.[29]

## MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS

In addition to books mentioned above, Rishi Dayanand also wrote the following books.

***The Autobiography***

In April 1879, Colonel Olcott met Swamiji and requested him to write an autobiography. It was published in different issues of a monthly journal 'Theosophist' in October 1879, December 1879 and November 1880.[30] Swamiji was hardly 49 or 50 years of age, when he wrote this autobiography. Though brief and incomplete, it provides important facts of his initial life. It is an authoritative document of his pledges, distresses and bold decisions. Importantly, it has neither self-praise nor any boastful statements, indicative of vanity.

***Poona Pravachana***

Swamiji visited Poona (now Pune) on the request of Mahadev Govind Ranade in 1875. There he delivered fifty lectures out of which fifteen were delivered at Poona and 35 in

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the camp. The lectures at Poona were immediately published in Marathi script by Ganesha Janardana Agashe. Its Gujarati translation was published with the title *Upadesh Manjari.* The first Hindi translation of these fifteen lectures was published by Arya Pustak Pracharini Sabha, Ajmer. After that many editions of these lectures have been published under the title *Poona Pravachana* or *Upadesh Manjari.* The subjects of these fifteen lectures are: (i) *Īśvara Siddhi,* (ii) Solution of doubts on *Īśvara Siddhi,* (iii and iv) *Dharma, Adharma* and *Mukti,* (v) Subject of Veda, (vi) Subject of birth, (vii) Yajña and Sanskār, (viii-Xiii) Concerning History, (xiv) *Nitya Karma,* and (xv) Autobiography.

***Vyavahārabhānu***

Vyavahārabhānu was written at Kashi on Phālguna Shudi 15, Samvat 1936 (Friday, March 26, 1880). The book is useful for children. With interesting anecdotes and beautiful stories, it provides education about good conduct and courteous behaviour.

***Gokaruṇānidhi***

Rishi Dayanand wrote Gokaruṇānidhi for the protection of the cow and other domestic animals. While staying at Agra, Swamiji completed this book on Phalguna Badi 10, Samvat 1937 (Wednesday, February 23, 1881). At the end of this book, Swamiji has named it as the protector of cows (*Kāmadhenukā*).[31] It is available in several languages.

***Sanskrit Vākya Prabodha***

Swamiji prepared this book in Samvat 1936 for children and for those who wanted to learn Sanskrit. It was published from Vedic Yantralaya, Kashi on Phālguna Shukla 11, the same year (1880). It contains 52 *prakaraṇas.* Primarily, it is a book of conversation in Sanskrit, and the dialogues are written in an attractive style. There were some printing mistakes in the first edition, and Ambika Datta Vyās raised certain objections. Some of the objections were answered in *Arya Darpan* (a monthly magazine) of May, 1880. Evidential solution of these objections was made by Yudhishthira Mimamsaka in his excellent edition of *Sanskrit-Vākya Prabodha.*

***Gardabhatāpinī Upaniṣad***

Probably written in Samvat 1931 (i.e. 1874), its title suggests that Swamiji had a jolly nature. He also used to relate interesting stories in his lectures. This book is now unavailable.

***Gautama Ahalyā Kathā***

This book, presently unavailable, was published sometime before Chaitra Samvat 1937 (March 1881). There is a famous story of *Gautama-Ahalyā* in Indian literature, and perhaps Swamiji had written about the same in this book.[32]

***Unpublished manuscripts***

Dr. Dharmavir, President, Paropkarini Sabha, Ajmer, has given a brief description of 37 unpublished manuscripts written or got written by Swami Dayanand, in his article *Rishi*

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*Dayanand krit Granthon kī aprakāshit Pāṇḍulipiyan aur unkī Upayogitā.* These manuscripts are important from the point of view of research. Swamiji had also got the Qur'ān translated in Hindi.

## PATRAS AND VIJÑĀPANAS

The correspondence of Rishi Dayanand is an invaluable social property. These letters help immensely in understanding Dayanand and highlight his objectives and penance.

The letters written or got written by Swamiji are in Sanskrit, Hindi, Urdu and English. As Swamiji did not know Urdu or English, he clearly got these letters written by others. Due to the efforts of his followers, a good collection of the letters and advertisements is available. The first available letter written by Swami Dayanand is dated Bhādrapada Shukla 6, Samvat 1927 (Thursday, September 1, 1870). This was sent from Farrukhabad to Pt. Gangadutt (Mathura) and the last letter available, was sent to Kamal Nayan, Secretary, Arya Samaj, Ajmer from Jodhpur on October 1, 1883. The collection and editing work of the letters and advertisements was done by Mahatma Munshiram, Chamupati, Mamraj, Bhagavaddatta, Yudhisthira Mimamsaka and Dr. Vedpal from time to time.

Mahatma Munshiram edited some of the correspondence of Rishi Dayanand. Bhagavaddatta did commendable work in collecting and editing the letters and advertisements of Swami Dayanand with the assistance of several persons. Its first, second, third and fourth parts were published by Arya Pradeshik Pratinidhi Sabha, Panjab and Sindh, Lahore in October 1918, 1919, January 1927 and July 1927 respectively. This collection contains 526 letters or their portions and 79 advertisements. The letters and advertisements written by Rishi Dayanand and edited by Pandit Bhagavaddatta are available in part one and two and the letters and advertisements edited by Yudhishthira Mimamsaka which were written to Rishi Dayanand Saraswati are available in part third and fourth. These have been published by Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Bahalgarh.

Virjanand Daivkarni worked on the correspondence of Swamiji for quite some time. Later Dr. Vedpal edited the complete correspondence and advertisements of Maharshi Dayanand (*Maharshi Dayanand Sawaswati kā Patra Vyavahāra*). It has been published by Paropkarini Sabha, Ajmer in two parts running into 1384 pages.

These letters and advertisements contain Swamiji's views about Sanskrit, Hindi the importance of the Veda, the work of Vedic commentary, condition of women, Cow protection, writing and publication of books and many other subjects. There is a proclamation of the progress of India and Swaraj in his letters. Use of Namaste as mutual social courtesy today to pay respect to other persons quite common universally owes its emergence to Dayanand from our ancient cultural heritage.

## CONCLUSION

The sources of Swami Dayanand's writings and his conclusions are the Vedas, Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas, Upaniṣads, Vedāṅgas and other *ārṣa* granthas. He quoted the

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seers from Brahmā to Jaimini as evidence, and always gave the original references in support of his expositions. He has profusely used the etymological style, the dialogue style, the question-answer style, the debate style, the *ārṣa* style, the *Ākhyāna* style and the sayings and idioms in his writings.[33] Because of this, the language has become interesting and lively.

According to Swamiji, the meaningfulness of *Karma* is in knowledge and that of knowledge is in action: *Na kevalena karmaṇā na kevalena jñānena ca kaścadapi dharmādisiddhim kartum samartho bhavati.*[34] His work is an embodiment of this belief. The scope of Swamiji's work is vast and awe-inspiring, given that the time he got for his work was just twenty years. The vast treasures of the ancient Shāstras and their deep meanings were revealed for the benefit of humanity through his writings. He had attained such an enlightened state of mind that whatever he uttered was authentic and true. Dayanand was indeed rationality personified!

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21. Dayanand Saraswati, 2015 Vikrami, *Yajurvedabhāshyam,* Vedic Pustakalaya, Ajmer, *Yajurveda,* 2.21; वेत्ति चराचरं जगत् स जगदीश्वरः, विदन्ति वा येन स वेदः।
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# CHAPTER 5

# Shāstrārthas of Swami Dayanand

*Somdev Shatanshu and Brahmadev Vidyalankar*

In order to make the Vedic Lore intelligible and accessible to everyone, the seers and sages composed scriptures and treatises such as Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas, Ayurveda and other Upavedas, Upaniṣads, six Vedāṅgas (viz. Śikṣā, Kalpa, Chanda, Jyotiṣa, Nirukta and Vyākaraṇa), Upāṅgas such as Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika philosophies, and Smriti scriptures such as Manusmriti and Shilpa-Shāstra.[1] However, with the passage of time, some people, for their selfish interests, polluted the wisdom of the Vedas and other scriptures by giving faulty expositions of Vedic hymns and other religious treatises, by composing and adding verses to most of these books, and by authoring new books to propagate their false and misguiding beliefs. Dayanand challenged various sects and the orthodoxy through his writings, speeches and shāstrārthas to re-establish the essence of the Vedas and for the spread of true Vedic knowledge.

Shāstrārtha, which can be literally translated as 'the meaning of scriptures', is a time-honoured tradition of judging the correct meaning of the contents of the scriptures conclusively, through question-answer and debate, arriving at a logical, fair and a final judgment. Thus shāstrārtha, or religious disputation, is the mode used over centuries for establishing the correct interpretation of the scriptures on a variety of topics. The tradition finds a mention in the Brāhmaṇaic and Upaniṣadic scriptures.[2] We also get a detailed description of the tradition in the Shāstrārthas of Acharya Shankara. Armed with an enlightened understanding of the ārṣa granthās, an unparalleled command over Sanskrit grammar and powers of irrefutable logic, Swami Dayanand made full use of the tradition and style of shāstrārtha in his mission. He undertook dozens of shāstrārthas and answered several crucial questions on various subjects.

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## SHĀSTRĀRTHAS ON IDOLATRY

The largest number of shāstrārthas undertaken by Swami Dayanand, were on the subject of idolatry. He has enumerated sixteen vices flowing from the practice of idolatry in Satyarth Prakash.[3] He also asserted that it is because of this practice that people give up the true worship of God, become unmindful of the real form of God and thus turn idle, fatalistic, and dependent. It was for this reason, that he condemned idolatry most vehemently.

The two most important shāstrārthas on idolatry were held at Kashi (1869) and Hoogly (1873). Besides these, a list of seventeen other shāstrārthas and seven question-answer sessions compiled by Raghunandan Singh Nirmal,[4] is as follows:

Shāstrārtha with (i) many Pandits of Sanskrit Pāthashālā at Jaipur, (ii) Pandit Ambadatta Vaidya at Karnawas in November 1867, (iii) Hiravallabh Parvati at Karnawās, (iv) Sadhu Krishnendra Saraswati at Ramghat in 1867, (v) Pandit Angad Ram Shastri at Soron in 1868, (vi) Pandit Haldhar Ojha at Kanpur on July 31,1869, (vii) Ram Rattan Laddha at Mirzapur in 1869, (viii) Pandit Rudra Datta and Pandit Chandra Datta at Ārā on April 8, 1873, (ix) Pandit Jagannāth at Chhapara in May 1873, (x) Pandit Durga Datta at Dumarao in August 1873, (xi) a group of Pandits at Bharuch in December 1874, (xii) Pandit Mahidhar and Pandit Jeewan Ram Shastri at Rajkot in January 1875, (xiii) a group of Pandits at Ahmedabad in January 1875, (xiv) Acharya Kamal Nayan at Mumbai on June 12, 1875, (xv) a number of Pandits at Mumbai in March 1876, (xvi) Pandit Ram Lal Shastri at Mumbai on March 27, 1876, and (xvii) Pandit Lakshmidhar and Pandit Daulat Ram at Gurdaspur in August 1877.

Question-Answer with (i) Thakur Kishan Singh at Kayamganj in 1868, (ii) Pandit Harishankar at Kannauj in 1869, (iii) Pandit Shri Gopal at Farrukhabad on May 24, 1869, (iv) Pandit Haldhar Ojha at Farrukhabad on June 19, 1869, (v) Pandit Shiv Ram at Masuda in December 1878, (vi) Moola Mistri at Kumbha Mela at Haridwar, and (vii) Bihari Lal Isāi at Ajmer in March 1882.

## SHĀSTRĀRTHAS ON OTHER TOPICS AND FAITHS

Swami Dayanand engaged in dozens of shāstrārthas and many question-answer debates with the representatives of various sects and faiths on several other subjects, besides idolatry. The six most prominent of these shāstrārthas, are the ones at (i) Jalandhar (1877), (ii) Bareilly (1879), (iii) Udaipur (1882), (iv) Ajmer (1878), (v) Masuda (1881), and (vi) the response to a resolution passed by Pandits, in Swami Dayanand's absence at Calcutta (1881).

Some of his other shāstrārthas are:

1. With Padre Grey on Christian Religion in June 1866 at Ajmer.
2. With several Muslim scholars in 1868 at Farrukhabad on the subject: Is Mohammad a Messenger of God/ a Prophet?
3. With Maulavi Ahmed Ali Doowan on the subject: Sexual relationship between Adam and Eve in November 1868 at Kasganj.
4. With Sadhu Maya Ram Paramhans on: Neo-Vedānta in 1869 at Banaras.

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5. With a follower of Vallabh sect on the subject: *Vallabhmat* on November 16, 1874 at Mumbai.
6. With a number of Pandits on the subjects: *Niyoga* and *Vyākaraṇa* in March 1875 at Mumbai.
7. With Padre Parker on the subject: Coming into being of the Cosmos, etc. in November 1876 at Muradabad.
8. With Maulavi Mohammed Qasim and Padre Scott on the subject: A Thoughtful Discussion on what True Religion is, on March 19-20, 1877 at Mela Chandpur.
9. With Padre Werrey Sahab on the subjects: Shri Krishna and Christianity, in April 1877 at Ludhiana.
10. With a Padre and a Maulavi on the subject: Prophet's misconduct, from November 7, 1877 to December 29, 1877 at Rawalpindi.
11. With Buchaneen on the subject: No Mention of Burial of the Dead in the Vedas, in January 1878 at Gujarat in Punjab.
12. With Padre Swift on the subject: The Distinction between God and Soul, on February 18-20, 1878 at Gujaranwala.
13. With Padre Clark on the subject: Eats and Drinks (Question-Answer), in June 1878 at Amritsar.
14. With Col. Mansant on the subject: The Bible has no Evidential Value, in August 1878 at Roorkee.
15. With Paurāṇic Pandits on the subject: God assumes human shape, and the challenge thrown to Dayanand by Paurāṇic Pandits, in 1878 at Bareilly.
16. With Baqar Ali Beg on the subject: The Places of Pilgrimage for Hindus and Muslims, in February–April 1879 at Haridwar.
17. With a Neo-Vedāntic Sadhu on: Neo-Vedāntism, on April 5, 1879 at Haridwar.
18. With Munshi Indramani on: Namaste, in July 1879 at Muradabad.
19. With Pandit Ram Prasad and Pandit Vrindavan on the subject: Incarnation of God, in August 1879 at Badayun.
20. With a Sadhu belonging to Rādhāswāmi Sect on: Rādhāswāmism, in November 1880 at Agra.
21. With Padre Conread on: Vedic Religion and Christianity (A Conversation), on December 12, 1880 at Agra.
22. With a Qazi on August 28, 1881 at Raipur on the subject: Are Muslims Slave Progeny?
23. With Reverend Joseph Coke on Christianity, on January 18, 1882 at Mumbai.
24. With the followers of Ramsnehi Sect on: Ramsnehism, in March 1882 at Shahpura.
25. With Hemchandra Chakravarty on: Caste System, and The existence of God. (Question-Answer), in January 1873 at Calcutta.
26. With Kripa Ram, on: Omnipresence of God (Question-Answer), in November 1877 at Ferozepur.
27. With Seth Harmuz on the subject: Eats and Drinks (Question-Answer), in March 1878 at Multan.

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28. In September 1878 at Meerut for finalising the rules governing Shāstrārthas and other miscellaneous issues (Question-Answer).
29. With a number of Pandits on a variety of subjects (Question-Answer), in October 1878 at Farrukhabad.
30. With Raja Govind Singh at Baneda on the subject: Conquering God (Question-Answer), in October 1881.
31. With the Maharana at Udaipur in August 1882 on the subject: On Whom to Meditate, and How? (Question-Answer).
32. With Rao Raja Mohan Singh on the subject: Neo-Vedāntism (Question-Answer), in June 1883 at Jodhpur.

Besides the aforementioned shāstrārthas, a record of several other conversations, question-answer sessions and discussions is also available.[5] Given below are the details of some of his important shāstrārthas.

## KASHI SHĀSHTRĀRTHA

Swami Dayanand reached Ramnagar (Kashi) on September 21, 1869. There, sitting under a tree, he began to preach the Vedic beliefs. The news about his Vedic scholarship and his fierce condemnation of idolatry soon spread in the city like wild fire. The then Ruler of Kashi, Maharaj Ishwari Narayan Singh, a votary of saintly souls, did his best to dissuade the Swami from disparaging Paurāṇic beliefs and from demolishing idolatry by arranging a cordial and a ceremonious welcome in the Swami's honour, and also by luring him with the offer of temporal gains.[6] But the Swami, least affected by such temptations, and undeterred by the threats from certain quarters, remained adamantly busy in condemning idolatry.

Many scholars and respected figures of Kashi, such as Sant Avinash Mehrotra, Jyoti Swaroop Udaseen and others had become fully acquainted with the scholarship of Swamiji. The effect of his refutation of idolatry had started becoming evident at Kashi. People would often leave, after attending his discourses, without even visiting the Durga Temple. It created a commotion, and alarmed the group of Pandits living on the income from idolatry. These Pandits and the Ruler of Kashi himself, began hatching conspiracies to defeat Swamiji in a shāstrārtha by fair or foul means. The scholars of Kashi such as Shri Ram Shastri, Damodar Shastri, Bal Shastri and Raja Ram Shastri would often send their disciples to debate with the Swami. They sought the support of Shaligram Shastri, Pandit Dhundi Raj Shastri, Pandit Damodar Shastri and others by asking them for a list of scriptures which were treated as reliable evidence and also of those which were not. The Ruler of Kashi asked Pandit Sakha Ram Bhatt to place the Paurāṇic viewpoint in a debate but he did not come forward making various excuses. Eventually, the Pandits decided to engage in a shāstrārtha with Swami Dayanand at Anand Bagh on November 16, 1869 in the presence of the Ruler of Kashi, but only after having gathered many hooligans for disturbing the scene in case of their defeat. The topic of the debate was – Is idolatry in consonance with the Vedic beliefs? On the one side was poised Swami Dayanand, all alone, and on the other were grouped forty reputed scholars of Kashi including the top-most Pandits like Swami Vishuddhanand,

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Pandit Bal Shastri, Pandit Tara Charan Tarkaratna and others.[7] All the Pandits had assembled in support of idolatry. The Ruler of Kashi, Maharaj Ishwari Narayan Singh, his brother Prince Veereshwar Narayan Singh, Tez Singh Verma and other dignitaries of the city were also present. The Ruler of Kashi tried to disturb the seating arrangements made by the Police Station In-charge, Pandit Raghunath Prasad so that Swami Dayanand was left without any possible support even from his only supporter, Pandit Jyoti Swaroop. Thus amidst all these intrigues and manoeuvrings, began the great debate under the mediation of Kashi *Naresh* (the Ruler of Kashi).[8]

The Swami asked the Pandits: If you accept the Vedas as a source of reliable evidences, could you quote any evidence from them supporting the worship of idols made of stone and other such material. Pandit Taracharan did accept the reliability of the Vedas, but to derail the debate, he started talking of other scriptures as sources of reliable or unreliable evidence. At this the Swami said, "Those books which are based on the beliefs and tenets of the Vedas are acceptable as evidence, and the ones which are not, are not." Swami Dayanand proved Manusmriti to be the one based on the Vedas by citing an extract from the Tāṇḍya Brāhmaṇa of Sāmaveda.[9] This rendered Taracharan speechless.

At this point Swami Vishuddhanand asked, 'What is the Vedic basis of the Vedāntic aphorism: *Racanānupapatteścanānumānam*?'[10] Swami Dayanand replied, 'don't take recourse to *vitaṇḍā*[11] (perverse argumentation, the act of refuting the assertion of an opponent without establishing one's position) by bringing in an unrelated issue as this sort of digression is unjustified.' Swami Vishuddhanand then retorted, 'If all the scriptures are not at hand and are not readily citable by you, why have you come here for a debate?' Swami Dayanand at this asked him, 'If you have all the scriptures at hand and if you can quote them readily then let me know what are the indicators of *dharma* (righteousness)?.' Unable to give an answer on the basis of *Śruti* and *Smṛti*, Vishuddhanand asked Swamiji to answer his own question. He replied that on the basis of *Smṛti* scriptures, the indicators of *dharma* are ten, as follows:

*Dhṛtiḥ kṣamā damo'steyam śaucamindriyanigrahaḥ,*
*Dhīrvidyā satyamakrodho daśakam dharmalakṣaṇam.*[12]

Bal Shastri came to his fellow-pandit's rescue. Swamiji rendered him speechless too, by asking him to tell what the indicators of *adharma* (unrighteousness) are.[13]

Then many Pandits jointly asked the Swami, "Does the word *'pratimā'* not figure anywhere in the Vedas?" The Swami replied, "This word finds a mention in *Ṣaḍviṇśa Brāhmaṇa* in the aphorism: *Devatāyatanāni kampante daivatapratimā hasantītyādīni*[14] However, there is no mention of the word *pratimā* where it may indicate an idol made of wood or stone meant for worshipping." On being asked by the Pandits about the meaning, the Swami explained the hymns occurring in this context, by providing the grammatically and lexically correct meaning.[15] Then Swamiji asked Bal Shastri: "Who is *vighna-darśayita* (one who foreshows the impediments)?" Bal Shastri replied, "The Senses." But Bal Shastri was fell silent when Swamiji told him, "The senses foresee rather than foreshow," and also asked him what the word *sa* (स) stands for in the sentence: *Sa prācīm diśamanvāvarttate* (स प्राचीं दिशमन्वावर्त्तते). Seeing Bal Shastri speechless,

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Pandit Shiv Sahaya replied, "It means and indicates the reward flowing out of attempt to pacify." At this the Swami asked him to explain the meaning of any of the hymns belonging to that context. Having nothing to say, Pandit Shiv Sahaya was also rendered speechless.

Then Swami Vishuddhanand asked Swami Dayanand, "Wherefrom did the Vedas come into existence? Which God brought them into being? What is the relationship between the two?" To this Swamiji replied. "There is only one God and Vedas were brought into being by Him who is in the form of *Saccidananda*, which means He is Ever-existent, Conscious and Blissful.[16] There is the relationship of cause and effect between the two." Then Swami Vishuddhanand said in support of idolatry, "Worshipping God by thinking of God in one's mind and considering an object such as Sun to be God is idolatry.[17] The same spirit should be there in the worship of *Śāligrāma*." Swami Dayanand said, 'Though the stated belief is not for me to prove, what perhaps you wanted to quote is: *Mano brahmetyupāsīta* (मनो ब्रह्मेत्युपासीत) which by no means is *Pāṣāṇādi brahmetyupāsīta* (पाषाणादि ब्रह्मेत्युपासीत). Why should then we take it that the stone and similar objects should be regarded as God?' Although the aforesaid epigram was taken not from the Vedas, from a Brāhmaṇaic scripture, yet the citation was enough to silence Vishuddhanand.

Pandit Madhavacharya then quoted *udbuddhyasvāgne pratijāgṛhi tvamiṣṭāpūrtte samsrjethāmayam ca* and pointed out that the word *pūrtta* (पूर्त्त) in this hymn is indicative of idolatry being in consonance with the Vedic beliefs. At this the Swami said, "The word *pūrtta* here does not at all indicate idolatry; instead, it stands for the construction of a pool, tank, orchard, etc."

Then Pandit Madhavacharya asked, "Does the word *Purāṇa* (पुराण) figure anywhere in the Vedas?" The Swami replied, "It does figure at several places, but has been used only as an adjective describing (i) matters gone by, or (ii) old things. Even in the phrase *Brāhmaṇānītihāsapurāṇāni* (ब्राह्मणानीतिहासपुराणानि), the word has been used to indicate old, ever-flowing Brāhmaṇaic scriptures (the theological portion of the Vedas), etc. and by no means, the Paurāṇic scriptures.[18]

Swamiji asked Bal Shastri, "What object does the word कल्म (*kalma*) refer to in grammar?" Shastri could not answer this question.

Sensing defeat and looking for an escape, Mādhavāchārya took out two pieces of papers and threw them among the group of Pandits assembled there. On these papers was written: *Yajñasamāptau satyām daśame divase purāṇānām pāṭham śṛṇuyāditi* which means: Do attend the recitation of Purāṇās on the tenth day, the last day of a *yajña*.[19] At this the Pandits asked, "What does the word *purāṇā* stand for here?" The Swami tried to reply that, "it means ancient knowledge – the Vedic Lore and the theology carried in the Upaniṣads. If it had meant what you take it to mean, then the word *brahmavaivartta* (ब्रह्मवैवर्त्त) would have figured here." However, the Pandits just wanted to leave the place without listening to Swamiji.

Vishuddhanand got up saying, 'We are getting late; let us leave.' All the Pandits and their followers created a ruckus, and left shouting repeatedly that Dayanand had been defeated. The Pandits too, caring little for their trustworthiness and sincerity,

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made an announcement in the city of Kashi that Dayanand had been defeated. They published two pamphlets entitled '*Dayanand Prabhuti*' (Defeat of Dayanand) and '*Durjanmukhmardan*' (Crushing the pride of a wicked person), and viciously propagated the lie. They also spread this falsehood by circulating an advertisement to this effect, which was signed by Bal Shastri. However, details of the debate under the heading *The Kashi Shāstrārtha* appeared in many newspapers and magazines of that time. A scrutiny of the text clearly proves the Pandits wrong. The neutral and dispassionate journalists wrote clearly and categorically that Dayanand had an edge over his rivals in the debate.[20] They had also added that the steady, resolute and nonchalant Dayanand had remained undisturbed even in the face of uneven and adverse situation.

Swamiji visited Kashi a number of times after this, and he challenged the Pandits every time through advertisements to join him in debate, but none mustered up the courage to come forward with any evidence from the Vedas supporting idolatry. When Swamiji went to Kashi for the fifth time, the Ruler of Kashi invited him to his palace showing great regard, seating him on a gold chair. He apologised to Swamiji for the disrespect shown to him in the Shāstrārtha held in 1869. This apology also speaks volumes of the fact that Swamiji had won the debate of 1869.[21]

## HOOGLY SHĀSTRĀRTHA

Swami Dayanand Saraswati reached Hoogly in April 1873 and began to preach the Vedic Lore whilst staying in the garden of Vrindavan Chandra Mandal. Pandit Taracharan Tarkaratna of Bhātpāra village near Hoogly used to criticise Dayanand bitterly behind his back. He had promised thrice to the two devotees of Swami Dayanand, *viz.* Raja Jyoteendra Mohan Thakur and Shaureendra Mohan Thakur that he would meet Swamiji for a shāstrārtha, but did not muster up courage to face him. He was finally persuaded by Vrindavan Chandra for a shāstrārtha with the Swami.[22]

On April 18, 1873, Pandit Taracharan brought many people along with Vrindavan Chandra, Bhoodev Mukherjee (who was the President of the managements of many schools) and Harihar Tarkasiddhānta. It was decided that Pandit Taracharan would prove the endorsement of idolatry on the basis of evidences from the Vedas, the Upavedas, the Vedāṅgas and six philosophical treatises, and that Swami Dayanand would cite evidences to the contrary.

Taracharan, in support of idolatry, cited the aphorism: *Cittasya ālambane sthūla ābhogo vitarkaḥ* (चित्तस्य आलम्बने स्थूल आभोगो वितर्कः) which he ignorantly and hence wrongly claimed to be from the *Yogasūtras* as the relevant aphorism was *Viṣayavatī vā pravṛttirutpannā manasaḥ sithatinibandhinī.*[23] By quoting *Svarūpe sākśādvatī prajñā ābhogaḥ* (स्वरूपे साक्षाद्वती प्रज्ञा आभोगः) – an extract from the commentary of Vachaspati, instead of one from the *Yogasūtras*, Tarkaratna had himself conceded defeat by violating the terms and conditions of the shāstrārtha. Taracharan's shallow knowledge of Sanskrit was betrayed by his using the word *eva* (एव) thrice unnecessarily in the sentence: *Yaduktam bhavatā tenaiva pratimāpūjanameva siddhyatyeva tasya sthūlatvāt* (यदुक्तं भवता तेनैव प्रतिमापूजनमेव सिद्ध्यत्येव तस्य स्थूलत्वात्). The Swami said, "With your four-armed Viṣṇu sitting in the Vaikuṇṭha,

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how is it possible for anyone to sit near him in his worship and devotion. And the stone idol which has been readied by the manufacturer can by no means be Viṣṇu." Taracharan could not think of response to this question.

Taracharan tried justifying idolatry on the basis of imagining the abstract through a gross object. In his attempt, he sometimes digressed into citing irrelevant examples and illustrations, and sometimes into unrelated topics like saying that all prayers are misleading, etc. At this Swami Dayanand said, "Your own statements demolish the practice of idolatry." The Pandits were rendered silent, and went to a room upstairs. As he was leaving, the Swami encountered Pandit Taracharan, and the latter admitted, "I keep on preaching and advocating the studies and teachings of holy scriptures. However, if I were to state the truth I would lose my livelihood as I would be ousted from the job by the Ruler of Kashi."[24]

## JALANDHAR SHĀSTRĀRTHA

Swamiji reached Jalandhar on September 13, 1877. He delivered a number of lectures on patriotism, and on the real form and the correct interpretation of the Vedas during his stay at Sardar Vikram Singh Ahluwalia's bungalow. As per the wishes of the people there, a debate was fixed to be held with Maulavi Ahamed Hussain on September 24, 1877. The topics chosen for the debate were *Miracles* and *Rebirth.* The Maulavi was to present arguments against the concept of rebirth, and the Swami was to argue in its support. Similarly, the Maulavi was to uphold his belief in miracles, while Swamiji was to refute it. It was decided that the questions and their answers would be presented in a written form, and attested with their signatures by Lala Hamir Chand and Mohammad Hussain. It was further decided that the attested transcripts would be published so that the public could read it and arrive at what was correct and what was not.

Speaking on the issue of miracles, the Maulavi said,

> A person's natural urges are termed his 'nature', and any supernormal action that he is able to perform against that nature, is to be termed a miracle. A human usually does two types of actions: first are those which he seems to be presenting, and the second are those which he himself does. For example, the puppet dance is presented by God through humans. This act cannot be done by every human, only a few can do it.

"Can God do or get evil deeds done? Are miracles against the nature of the cosmos or not?" In reply to these two questions of the Swami, the Maulavi said, "God can get deeds done against the nature of the humans but such deeds are never against the nature of God. Besides, the miracles never take place against the nature of the cosmos, and never take place in consonance with the nature of the cosmos." The Maulavi's reply carried a paradox with the expressions 'against the nature of the cosmos' and 'in consonance with the nature of the cosmos' being self-contradictory.

Further arguments were centred on the proof and demonstrability of miracles. The Maulavi argued, "You prove Vedas to be a Divine composition, but do they carry

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God's stamp of attestation? The logic that you cite for proving the Vedas to be Divine is applicable to the occurrence of miracles too." In reply, Swami Dayanand said,

> That the Vedas are a creation of God is not an impossible concept in as much as God is Immanent, Kind and Omniscient. He, being Immanent, can enlighten the soul with all knowledge. As God's nature is proved by perceivable evidence such as the existence of a perfect order in the cosmos, same way the presence of impeccable and limitless knowledge in the Vedas is tantamount to the affixation of God's stamp on it. If the stamp of God is required for proving this cosmos to be the creation of God, where is there such a stamp affixed on Humans, Earth, Sun, Moon, etc.? If you believe that God can make humans work against their nature, is it then possible to feed them through their legs, or can they be made perform the function of legs with their mouth? As a matter of fact, the people belonging to various religious sects have carried out this groundwork to trap people in the name of miracles or forecasts.

In support of his contention regarding miracles, the Maulavi said, "Anyone doubting the veracity of my contention can go to the city of Mecca or Sham country (the present Syria) and see for himself those forty men who have worked miracles. Besides, the creation of the Sun, the Moon and other wonderworks in the cosmos are in themselves an affixation of stamp by God on His creation."[25]

After this, the debate shifted to the subject of rebirth, with Swami Dayanand in favour of the concept and Maulavi Ahmed Hussain against it. The Maulavi tried to refute the postulation of the Matter and the Soul being unborn and ever-existent. One of his arguments was: How can we know a thing if we cannot perceive it with our senses? However, if Maulavi's contention that we should believe in the existence of only those substances which can be perceived through senses were accepted, it would lead to many problems as certain substances such as the Soul, God, etc. which are not perceptible with our senses, do exist. The three entities, *viz.*, God, Soul and *prakṛti* - all are unborn and ever-existent.[26] The Maulavi further argued,

> An action has its genesis in desire. And desire depends on time. And the beginning, the middle and the end of time cannot take place simultaneously. Besides, the actions carried out at a particular time in the past have all vanished. How can the birth, the reward and the retribution flow out of those actions? Besides, the faith in rebirth will result into many ills. For example, if some human, after his death enters the body of a donkey or a dog, he won't acquire the characteristics of human body.

The Swami countered,

> The flow of time is continuous. In order that reward or retribution of actions is delivered, it is not necessary for the beginning, the middle and the end of the time to occur simultaneously. It is a matter of common knowledge that all

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humans celebrate their good actions, and repent, detest and dislike their bad deeds done in the past. The occurrences like birth, etc. and the delivery of reward and retribution of actions take place systematically under the arrangements of the Almighty who is All-Pervasive in matter and time.[27]

This rebuttal by the Swami shattered the Maulavi's plea that the action done in the past, perishes, as its impression does stay in our conscience in the form of a deep influence.[28] The variety we see in the cosmos is also on account of the varied actions taking place all around.[29] No action takes place without its cause. So the different levels of living and its quality being enjoyed by souls are attributable to past deeds.

Further, the Maulavi's plea that all earned rewards disappear, resulting into a great loss when soul enters the body of a pig, a donkey, etc., is akin to arguing that one should never sleep because that will result into the loss of all that one has acquired during wakefulness. And if the Maulavi takes the plea that all the earnings acquired before sleep reappear upon waking up from sleep, it can be similarly argued that after the period of soul in the body of a dog, etc. is over, and the soul returns to human body, all its earnings in earlier human lives reappear for reward and retribution.[30]

There are many references in the Qur'ān too, which prove the concept of rebirth. Consider, for example, the statement: *'Alyasa zalika bakadirin ala ayyuhil mauta'*,[31] which means: Is He not so powerful as to bring the dead to life again? Surely He is, and can give and does give life even after death.

Thus all arguments presented by the Maulavi were successfully countered, and the concept of rebirth, proven true.[32]

## BAREILLY SHĀSTRĀRTHA

The Bareilly shāstrārtha has a special place among the famous shāstrārthas of Swami Dayanand. It took place between Swami Dayanand and Padre T.J. Scott on August 25-27, 1879 at the Government Library under the Presidentship of Lala Laxmi Narayan Khazanchee, Rais of Bareilly. On the three days, the three topics that were debated were: (i) Rebirth, (ii) Does God ever acquire a human body? and (iii) Does God pardon humans for their misdeeds? Three writers were appointed to sit by the side of Swamiji, the Bishop and the President of the debate. Accordingly the statements were recorded word for word. Then the statements recorded by each of the three writers were read out to the public. Signatures of the three writers were secured on all the copies so that a certified copy each was left in the possession of all for publication.[33]

On the first day, the topic of discussion was Rebirth. Six statements in support of this concept by the Swami and five by Bishop Scott in refutation thereof were recorded. Initiating the debate Swami Dayanand gave four grounds for his viewpoint:

i. The Soul, its natural attributes, actions and nature are beginningless and ever-existent.

ii. The righteous and unrighteous deeds of souls have continued to be in flow since eternity. To give reward or retribution in a fair and just way, is an eternal attribute of God.

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iii. A soul cannot possibly enjoy happiness or suffer grief until it acquires a body.. So it becomes essential for a soul to acquire a body by taking birth in the form of one or the other species.

iv. There is a perfect sequence in the cosmos, and the definite cyclic order of the day and night, month etc. which stand perceptibly evidenced. All this proves the soul's entering the body and going out of it again and again.

Bishop Scott said,

> The faith in rebirth is an old and obsolete idea. However, now with the acquisition of education and knowledge, human societies all around have given up such baseless beliefs. Still there are a few questions to ponder here: Are souls other than the Godly Spirit too beginningless and ever-existent? Will they ever get deliverance from the cycle of births and deaths? Is rebirth only for receiving retribution? Does God always stay ready to get into His *avatar* (bodily) form, or is He always in an invisible form? Does taking birth by humans and other species depend on His principles only, or is there any other principle governing this occurrence?[34]

The Swami answered the questions raised by the Bishop thus,

> God, Soul and Matter are three entities which are beginningless and ever-existent. Souls never get permanently relieved of the cycle of births. Birth entails the delivery of both the reward and the retribution. God is all the time both *Saguṇa* (having attributes such as kindness, justness, etc.) and *Nirguṇa* (without body, hunger, thirst, etc.).[35] He delivers reward and punishment as per a soul's deeds, following His infallible system of justice.

After having answered the questions the Swami added,

> You have stated that the educated societies give up old practices. But are the new beliefs perfectly correct, and old ones not worth accepting at all? If that were so, you would have to give up the tenets and commandments of Bible and other Christian scriptures. As for reasoning, it has already been said if the Theory of *Karma* was not accepted, how could God give a soul, on its taking the human body, the state of being intelligent, dull-headed, and poor, or giving it the status of a king or a pauper. If birth were not to depend on the actions done in earlier human life, it would be tantamount to God's being unfair and unjust. But God can never be unjust and unfair.

Further questions by Scott can be encapsulated as follows: If both God and Soul were regarded as ever-existent and unborn, would there be no difference between the two? How is it possible for God to be both *Saguṇa* and *Nirguṇa*? And if soul is regarded as

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ever-existent, must not at least some memories persist? The Swami answered all these queries.

Denouncing the concept of rebirth, Scott argued that Soul was not eternal and considered it to have been born of body as he considered body to have been born of soul. Invalidating the belief, the Swami said,

> If we believe that body is born of Soul and Soul of body, God cannot be regarded as the creator of humans, and that proves your statement wrong. Besides, if your statement were to be accepted as a statement of a true position, how did the souls and bodies born in the very beginning come into existence? Further it would lead to many more such queries as cannot be answered. All this proves that Soul is beginningless, and takes birth as per the deserts of its actions.[36]

On the second day the topic of the debate was: Does God ever appear in a physical form? Initiating the discussion Padre Scott said, "If God so wills, He may appear in a body. Where is the hindrance?" The Swami then said,

> On acquiring a body, does He stay at one place or keep on moving? If He stays at one place He cannot possibly get information about all places. And if He moves, He may get stuck at any place. When God brings into being this cosmos does He do so in His invisible form or after acquiring a body? If He does so while in His invisible form, it appears logical. But if He does so on adopting a body, it is not possible for Him to create this cosmos as He can never control atoms and other forms of matter which are the material cause of the cosmos.

In this way the Padre tried to buttress his point of view six times, and the Swami presented his point five times, after which the debate came to a close.[37]

On August 27, 1879 – the third day of the debate – the topic of discussion was: Does God pardon the perpetrators of sinful deeds? While stating the propositional side of the argument, the Padre said, "I don't make the assertion that God does not punish. He does punish, but does so, keeping in view the time and the propriety of the methodology of punishment. He also pardons people for their good as do the parents and as does the King whose approach is to reform the errant. If He feels that the accused can be reformed by being excused, He excuses the latter."

Swamiji said, "If God pardons the errant, He proves Himself to be the promoter of sins and crimes. The sinners and criminals thus will be encouraged to commit more sins and crimes. It is in the nature of God to do justice. Why will He pardon anyone against His nature? His kindness and justness aim at the same target. God's attribute of being kind has not been understood correctly by the Padre."

The Padre spoke five times and the Swami spoke four times, and accordingly the discussion was accomplished peacefully.[38]

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## UDAIPUR SHĀSTRĀRTHA

The Udaipur Shāstrārtha was held on September 11, 13 and 17, 1882 between Abdul Rehman, Superintendent of Police and Judge, Udaipur court, Mewar on the one side and Dayanand on the other. Three writers were engaged to note down the proceedings of the debate with the aim of recording the statements correctly, for their publication in future.[39] The writers were: Brijnath Hakim Sayar, Mewar (who was also to work as the translator of difficult Arabic and Sanskrit words used in the debate), Mirza Mohammad Khan Vakil, Tonk, and was Munshiram Narain Sarishtedār Baghe Kalan Sarkārī.[40] Seven questions came up for discussion, which may be summed up as follows:

i. The first question of the Maulavi was: Which is that religion, the basic scripture of which is written in the spoken language of all humans, and which explains logically and convincingly, all natural phenomena? Which religion is then to be regarded as universally acceptable and hence true? To this the Swami replied, "The books of all the religions are full of partisan statements. In my opinion, the only book free of partisanship and sectarianism is the Veda. It does not belong to any of the so called religions in as much as it is a Code Book for the guidance of mankind, gifted to it at the very beginning of the universe. Its position is like that of the sky which does not belong to any particular country, and is all pervading. Similarly the language of the Veda does not belong to any particular country, and is hence universal.

ii. The second question was: When was man born and when will the species of mankind come to an end? The Swami, in reply, cited the *Jyotiṣaśāstra* in evidence to state that mankind came into being more than1,96,00,000,00 years ago.

iii. The next question of the Maulavi was: Do you have faith in any of the religions or not? The Swami replied, "The religion which is based on and is supported by logically true knowledge is the religion I have faith in."

iv. At this the Maulavi stated in response, with a tagged query: "All people belonging to different religious sects consider the books of their respective faiths to be the best. All of them adduce logical reasons for their beliefs as you are doing. And there is no clear proof with them to buttress their belief. In such a situation, what is special about the Vedas?" To this query the Swami replied, "There is nothing in the Vedas which runs counter to reason, logic and laws of nature."

v. The Maulavi then asked, "Is the matter (*prakṛti*) unborn and eternal? The Swami replied, "The *prakṛti* in the form of the material cause is beginningless." In fact God, Soul and *prakṛti* are all unborn on account of their eternal nature.

vi. The Maulavi asked again, "Is it not possible that the *prakṛti* you regard as the material cause of the cosmos may itself be the creation of some other material cause? If there has to be a cause for every effect, then there must be some cause for every cause also. Swamiji replied, "The unborn cause (in the form of a result) is the one which has no cause. Someone which is the effect of something can never be called an unborn and beginningless cause. This fact can be understood properly only by understanding the Science of Matter."

vii. The Maulavi then questioned the Swami's statement saying, "If God had gifted the Vedas to mankind as you say He had, this knowledge should have benefited the

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whole mankind globally as it has been benefited by the Sun, the Air, the Water and other natural objects." The Swami replied,

> The Vedas have benefited the whole mankind as it has been benefited by the Sun and other such objects. The Vedas are the fountainhead of all sects of religion and all books of knowledge. Vedic beliefs and teachings are found in the scriptures of all other sects too, either precisely or indirectly. Vedas don't carry remarks disparaging or upholding any principles or beliefs already in circulation. All these points establish that the Vedas have been in existence since the beginning of the creation. Those knowing Solar Science are benefited more by the Sun than those who don't know the Science. Similarly, those who study and practise the Vedic knowledge are benefited more, and those who do not, are benefited less.

## AJMER SHĀSTRĀRTHA

Swami Dayanand delivered many lectures on subjects like God, Godly Knowledge and related matters in Ajmer from 14th to 18th November, 1878. On the last day at the end of the lecture, he read out a long list of untruths carried in the Bible, and the Qur'ān, saying that such falsehoods have been stated in these books as can never be Godly Statements. On that day hundreds of Hindus, Muslims and Christians had assembled to hear the Swami. Whereas the Muslims did not show any reaction, Padre Grey and Dr. Husband came forward to answer the written queries and questions of the Swami.

Accordingly, Swami Dayanand wrote out 64 sentences from the two Testaments and sent them, the very next day, for comments to the Padre through Pandit Bhag Ram, Extra Assistant Commissioner, Ajmer. It took the Padre ten days to think over the implied queries, and then November 28 was fixed for the shāstrārtha. This debate began in the presence of Sardar Bahadur Munshi Aminchand, Judge, Pandit Bhag Ram, Sardar Bhagat Singh, Engineer and other respected persons. Babu Ram Nath, Headmaster of Jaipur, Babu Chandu Lal, Advocate from Gurgaon and Hafiz Mohammad Hasan of Ajmer were appointed as writers.

Swami Dayanand's first question was: "It is written in Genesis I-2 that the earth is irregular and misshapen. God is Omniscient and fully Knowledgeable. How can there be any incongruity in His creation?" Padre Grey replied that 'Irregular' here means 'deserted'. Rejecting the reply the Swami further asked, "In an earlier verse it has been stated that God created the earth and the sky, and the earth was incongruous and desolate. There was a depth on it which was clouded in darkness. From here it becomes clear that 'misshapen' cannot mean 'deserted' because for it the word 'lonely' has been used." The Padre said in support of his contention, "In all the languages two words meaning the same are used sequentially, as 'toho-boho' are used in the Iranian language. Here too, the two words have been used synonymously. So 'the earth was deserted and lonely' is a sensible and a correct statement." The Swami wanted to pose a supplementary question, but the Padre was not ready to answer more than two questions on any of the issues raised.

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The Swami's next question was, "According to Genesis I-26, God's Soul was hovering over the water, whereas according to the earlier verse God created the earth and the sky and there is no mention of water having been created. When there was no water in existence, why has a reference been made to 'water' here?"

Swami Dayanand asked, "Is God an entity in Spirit or in body? If He has a body, it is impossible for Him to get hold of all the required atoms to create things like earth, etc. because He, in a body, cannot be all-pervading. Again, where was His body when His Soul was hovering over the water?" The Padre replied, "When He created the earth, water also got created simultaneously. In The Bible God has been described as a Spirit." Countering the Padre, the Swami said, "In several contexts God has been described as a being in a physical form such as in creating the Garden of Eden, in His coming there and then going high up in the sky, going to the Sanai Mountain, talking to Musa, Ibrahim and his wife, and in other such episodes." The Padre said, "All these talks have no relevance as far as the *āyatas* are concerned. Such mentions are made only out of ignorance. God is only in the form of a Spirit."

The next question of the Swami was, "As per Genesis I-26, God has said that He created man in his own image which makes it clear that God like His man had a soul and a body. When God does not have a bodily form how could He have created man in His own image?" Padre Grey replied, "There is no mention of body in this verse. God created man a holy, knowledgeable and blissful being. But man fell from grace when he sinned. And those who have faith in and are votaries of God again become like Him on perceiving His essence and magnificence." The Swami reasoned,

> "When it is said that man was created by God like Himself, it suggests that God should be in a physical form like His man. When God had made man holy and knowledgeable like Himself, why did he disobey God by picking and eating the fruit of the forbidden tree of knowledge? Besides, it is stated that when he opened his eyes after eating the fruit only then did he become conscious of his nakedness. Why did he not become conscious of his nakedness earlier though he had been made by God as knowledgeable as He Himself? Also why did man fall from his knowledgeable state when God never does."

Padre failed to give a proper reply to the query. As for disobedience of God's instructions, the Padre said that man was, to begin with, holy but became a sinner after the said disobedience. However, the question of Swamiji which was not answered at all was, "When man was as holy as God, why did he violate the Godly instructions at all? As per the scripture, when the man ate the fruit of the forbidden tree of knowledge, he started being ashamed of his having become a sinner. If he had been like God, he would not have fallen from grace." In reply to queries related to such statements the Padre said, "God had made man like Him and not completely identical to Himself. So man was not wholly like Him even at the start."

Swamiji wanted to seek certain clarifications with regard to Genesis II-3 according to which God gave His blessings and made the cosmos static on the seventh day of His having created it.

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> Accordingly God must have worked very hard for six days resulting into fatigue which, as per above reference, necessitated for Him to take rest. God being Omnipresent, Omnipotent, Ever-existent, Omniscient and fully Blissful should not have been required to do any labour for bringing the cosmos into being. What did He do for six days that He had to give blessings only on the seventh day? As per our beliefs, God must not have undertaken any labour in the creation of the cosmos.

These were some of the posers and puzzlers of the Swami which remained unaddressed. Without answering these, the Padre left the venue saying, "The time is over. I cannot stay any longer." He did not agree to the suggestion that the debate should be recorded in writing, though the Swami strongly favoured the idea. Eventually Padre Grey conveyed through Sardar Bhagat Singh that he was not ready to continue with the debate as per the wishes, requirements and conditions suggested by the Swami.[41]

## MASUDA SHĀSTRĀRTHA

Swami Dayanand reached Masuda (Rajasthan) on June 13, 1881 for propagating his philosophical and religious beliefs, and delivered perceptive lectures for several days. Rao Bahadur Singh Rais asked some well-known followers of Jainism to arrange a shāstrārtha between Swamiji and any Jain scholar. The Jains decided that a shāstrārtha should take place between the Swami and Sadhu Siddhakaran, whom they regarded as a capable scholar and who was to come to Masuda from Kishangarh for *Chaturmāsya.*

Swami Dayanand, while having a walk, had a chance meeting with Sadhu Siddhakaran who happened to come the Swami's way. Having been introduced to each other, they started talking on certain topics related to Jainism. Seeing the two in conversation with each other, the Rao also joined them. When the Rao urged the Sadhu to answer the queries of the Swami, the Sadhu left in a huff without responding. Thereafter on July 13, 1881, Swami Dayanand sent some questions, to Sadhu Siddhakaran through Pandit Chhagan Lal Kamdar and Jyotiṣī Jagannath.

In the discussions that followed in a question-answer format, the main issues discussed related to the use of a piece of cloth on the mouth, drinking hot water in place of cold water and the living of infinite number of souls in a place as small as a paisa coin. The Swami's questions were as follows:

First Question: The Jains cover their mouth with a piece of cloth so that the hot air emanating from the mouth may not torture or kill the insects living in the environs. But the fact is that the air inside the mouth becomes hotter if the mouth is covered with a piece of cloth, which results in the torture and killing of more insects and other microbes. This further results in greater sin caused by greater violence.

Second Question: Another belief of the Jains that drinking hot or warm water prevents germs and creatures from being hurt or killed is also misplaced. This belief is false in as much as if cold water is taken, most of the insects come out of the body alive whereas if hot water is taken, all of them die. Taking hot water is like eating flesh as it hurts and even kills a lot many of the insects when we light up a fire and when steam

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and heat are generated thereby. So your stated belief about taking hot water for evading violence is an apparent misgiving.

Third Question: Many of the beliefs of Jains are untenable, for example the belief that infinite number of *jīvas* (souls) live in the *Kuṇḍs* (bowls) which are of a size as small as a paisa coin. A legitimate question arises: If the container, in which these *jīvas* live, is finite, how is it that its contents are infinite in number?

Pandit Chhagan Lal took the Swami's questions to Sadhu Siddhakaran, who was delivering a lecture. When the questions were read out to him, he refused to answer them. However, three days after that on July 15, 1881, he sent through Suraj Mal Kothari, his answers that were as follows:

"When fire burns and flames arise in a house, the outside air carrying insects goes inside that house through the door, and thus all the insects die. But if the door of the house is kept shut the insects present in the outside air are all saved. Similarly, the effect of the inside heat gets mitigated when it passes through the piece of cloth." He added, "If the mouth were left uncovered, a lot of spittle, foul smell, etc. would come out of the mouth. Hence the mouth should be covered with a piece of cloth."

In a counter-reply to this assertion, the Swami wrote back:

> Your assertion regarding the use of piece of cloth to cover the mouth flows only out of ignorance as the outside air is the basis of the life of all entities. No creature can survive without it, and even fire cannot burn unless joined by it. If we cut a creature adrift of the air, it will die an instant death. Lamp and fire get extinguished on being cut off from air. It is all because the outside air provides the basic and crucial support to all burning. This fact proves your stark lack of knowledge in this regard.
>
> The other point asserted by Siddhakaranji that air of the mouth becomes cool due to the cover provided by the cloth, is also inappropriate because the hot air from behind the cloth will remain hot whichever side it may go to. How can inside heat become cold unless it gets into contact with the outside air? If hot air kills small creatures, do all creatures die in the extremely hot months of *Vaiśākha* and *Jyeṣṭha* when hot winds blow? Similarly, do they die in the month of *Pauṣa* when it is extremely cold? So it is an incorrect assumption which runs counter to the laws of nature and universe. If that had been so, why should God have created the fire, the Sun, etc.?

Siddhakaran had written: "If the mouth is wrapped with a piece of cloth, it would save respectable persons and holy scriptures like the Vedas from spittle, foul smell, etc. while one is talking to others and studying the holy scriptures." The Swami replied:

> Usually a broad hem of cloth is used while having conversations but it does not prevent foul smell from emerging from the mouth. So it is useless to use this hem of cloth. Also Vedic hymns cannot be recited in correct rhythm and pronunciation with a piece of cloth on the mouth. Besides, we regard the

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contents of the Vedas, their meaning and their usefulness as holy and not the paper on which and the ink in which they are written.

On July 16, 1881 the Swami wrote a letter stating the unjustifiability of the practice of putting a piece of cloth on the mouth, of opening the mouth only at the time of taking food or when walking alone. He urged people to give up prejudices and adopt the Vedas and other true scriptures. This letter was sent through Pandit Vridhi Chandra, Jagannath Joshi, Vyas Narain, Babu Bihari Lal and others, and was read out to Sadhu Siddhakaran. The Sadhu replied, "We are saints and we aren't capacitated to reply such questions." People soon realised that he had accepted defeat,[42] and the contentions of the Jain sect were proved wrong by the Swami through logic and reasoning.

## THE MEETING AT CALCUTTA AND ITS RESPONSE[43]

Top Paurāṇic scholars from all over the country assembled on January 22, 1881 in the Senate Hall of Calcutta (now Kolkata) University to oppose vehemently the assertions made and principles enunciated by Swami Dayanand. Worth noting here is that the Swami was not invited to this assembly, much less was the version of his side of these ideas listened to, and yet his beliefs were denounced and disparaged vehemently. That the top scholars from the length and width of the country had not dared to invite the Swami, itself speaks volumes of his scholarship and widespread influence.

The organiser of Calcutta meeting was Pandit Mahesh Chand Nyayaratna. Present in this assembly were: Pandit Tara Nath Tarkavachaspati, Jeevanand Vidyasagar, B.A., Pandit Bhuwan Chandra Vidyaratna of Navadweep, about three hundred Pandits of Bengal, Pandit Banke Bihari of Kanpur, Yamuna Narayan Tewari, Sudarshan Acharya of Vrindavan, Pandit Ram Subramanya Shastri of Tanjore Madras Presidency and many honourable persons of Calcutta like Raja Yatindra Mohan Thakur. Pandit Mahesh Chand Nyāyaratna informed the participants of the aims of the meeting, and presented the questions that follow below after getting them seconded by Subrahmanya Shastri.[44]

First Question: Is the Brāhmaṇic part of the Vedas as authentically reliable as the *Samhitā* part of the Vedas, or not? Are other Smritis as reliably authentic as the Manusmriti, or not?

In reply to this question Subrahmanya Shastri said, "It is written in the Yajurveda: *Yatkinca manurabravīttad bheṣajam bheṣajatāyāḥ* (यत्किंच मनुरब्रवीत्तद् भेषजं भेषजतायाः), which means that whatever has been stated by Manu is all worth accepting. Dayanand also regards Manu as a reliable authority and has even acknowledged this fact by saying so, and by quoting him at several places in his Satyarth Prakash.[45] According to Manusmriti,[46] the Brāhmaṇic and Upaniṣadic parts of the Vedas are authentic. It has been said in the Manusmriti *Vedo'khilo dharmamūlam smṛtiśīle ca tadvidām,*[47] which means other Smritis are also reliable and enjoy evidential value."[48]

Second Question: Is it or is it not proper and in consonance with the holy scriptures to worship the idols of Shiva, Durgā, Viṣṇu and other gods; to carry out the *shrāddhas* in the honour and memory of the forefathers who are dead; to visit the Ganga, Kurukshetra and other places of pilgrimage for taking holy baths?

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Justifying all these rites, Subrahmanya Shastri quoted an extract of a hymn from the Ṛgveda in support of the worship of Śivaliṅga:

*Tava śriye maruto marjayanta rudra yatte janima cāru citram*[49]

which, he said, means, 'O Rudra! Your birth has been a miracle! Even gods set up the idols of your *Liṅga* and worship it.[50] 'Further, the Shastri, to prove that idolatry is a scripturally sanctioned rite, quoted evidence from *Rāmatāpini Upaniṣad:*

*Aham sannihitastatra pāṣāṇapratimādiṣu.*
*Kśetre'smin yo'rcayed bhaktyā mantreṇānena mām śiva.*

He said, 'The full hymn means: One who worships the idols made of stone, etc. gets acquitted of even grave sins like those arising out of the killing of a Brahman, etc.'[51] It is written in the *Bṛhajjābālopaniṣad: Śivaliṅgaṁ sasandhyamabhyarcayediti* (शिवलिंगं ससन्ध्यमभ्यर्चयेदिति), meaning one should worship *Śivaliṅga* during *Sandhyā* (deeply concentrating on the Almighty). Manu has also said, 'One should worship sages, seers, forefathers and gods after taking bath, and should also perform *yajña* with *samidhadān.*'[52] It has also been said in *Dewalsmiriti,* 'A dwij should worship *Śāligrāma* which is the symbol of Viṣṇu, and Mahālakshmī and Mahādurgā. The relevant verse is:

*Śaligrāmam hareḥ cihnam pratyaham pūjayed dvijaḥ, Mahālakśmīm mahādurgām nityam viprāṇamarcayet.*

शालिग्रामं हरेः चिह्नं प्रत्यहं पूजयेद् द्विजः।। महालक्ष्मीं महादुर्गां नित्यं विप्राणामर्चयेत्।।'

It has also been written in the *Baudhāyana Sūtras* that Mahadev who is a great spirit should be propitiated and worshipped. The relevant aphorism is: *Mahādevam mahāpuruṣam vārcayet,*"[53] The Shastri also stated that *Kaivalyopaniṣad* has been quoted by Swami Dayanand in the Satyarth Prakash, and thus implied that Dayanand treats the Upaniṣads as, of evidential value.[54] He further said, "It has been written in the *Sāmaveda Brāhmaṇa:*

*Devatāyatanāni kampante daivatapratimā hasantītyādīni*
देवतायतनानि कम्पन्ते दैवतप्रतिमा हसन्तीत्यादीनि

i.e., the temples shake and rock, the idols of gods laugh, weep and also sing."

He also stated that it was not correct on the part of Swami Dayanand to have misinterpreted the expression '*pratimīyante*' used in phrases like *Pratimānām ca bhedakaḥ,*[55] etc. as a reference to something 'which examines and assesses'. For his assertion, the Shastri resorted to a direction given in the *Pūrva Mīmānsā* vide which we should interpret a word as per its traditional and conventional meaning rather than its derivative and root meaning particularly when the former type of meaning has been given in a reliable dictionary.[56] He further asserted that the Vedas as well as the Smritis speak of idol worship as something worth doing and hence appropriate.

As evidence in support of *Shrāddha,* the following hymn from Yajurveda was quoted: *Nivītammanuṣyāṇām pracināvitam pitṛṇām* (निवीतम्मनुष्याणां प्राचीनावीतं पितृणाम्). It was interpreted as: one must hold the *Yajñopavīta* on the right shoulder and carry out the *pitṛkarma* (a rite supposedly honouring dead parents and fore-parents). The word *pitṛṇām* (पितृणाम्) used in the hymn is in plural form and is therefore indicative of a reference not only to one's father but also to one's grandfather, great grandfather and others, and thus a directive to show respect to all forefathers through *Shrāddha.*

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*Mṛtāmstu samatikramya cāṇḍalaḥ koṭijanmasu* (मृतांस्तु समतिक्रम्य चाण्डालः कोटिजन्मसु), is a line from a holy scripture, according to which, the one who does not observe *shrāddhas* in the honour of each of his dead forefathers on that day of the fortnight on which he died, takes birth after birth thousands of times in the family of *Chāndālas* (a community, allegedly of sinful and untouchable persons).[57] Thus the Samiti asserted that the rite of *shrāddha* carries the approval of the *Smritis* as well as *Śruti* (the Veda)

To prove that taking bath at some places of pilgrimage was in consonance with the holy scriptures that enjoy determinative value, the following hymn from the Ṛgveda was cited as evidence:

*Sitāsite sarītau yatra saṅgate tatra plutāso divamutpatanti.*
*Ye vai tanvā visarjanti dhīrāḥ te janāso'marṭatvaṁ bhajante.*[58]

and also *Imaṁ me gaṅge yamune...*[59] It was said that the name of Ganga and other places of pilgrimage find a clear mention in these hymns, and that it has also been stated that one can attain a place in the *Svarga* as a result of taking bath at these holy places.

It has also been mentioned in the Manusmriti that one should bathe in the Ganga and stay at Kurukshetra for getting rid of the ill effects of sins.[60] The places of pilgrimage are mentioned with respect in the Mahābhārata, and the Rāmāyaṇa etc. This leads us to conclude that bathing etc. at the places of pilgrimage enjoy the sanction of the Vedas and Smritis.

Third Question: Mahesh Chand Nyāyaratna asked, "What does the word *agni* mean in the Vedic hymn beginning *agnimīle...*?"[61] The Calcutta Pandits replied that the word *agni* in the expression *agnimīle,* refers to the fire that burns and not to God as its root-meaning runs counter to the spirit expressed and the direction given in the aphorism *rathakārādhikaraṇavat* (रथकाराधिकरणवत्) of the *Mīmānsā Darśana.*

Fourth question: Nyāyaratna asked, "Is the objective of *Agnihotra* and other such rites to purge the air, water and surroundings of the pollutants, or the attainment of *Svarga*?" Subrahmanya Shastri replied, "Agnihotra is carried out for the attainment of *Svarga* and not for purifying air, water, etc. as has also been said: *Agnihotraṁ juhuyātsvargakāmaḥ jyotiṣṭomena svargakāmo yajeta,*[62] which means that the one who aspires for the *Svarga,* should carry out *agnihotra* and in fact the *jyotiṣatom yajña.*

Fifth Question: "Is it or is it not tantamount to sinning, to disregard the Brāhmaṇa part of the Vedas?" Subrahmanya Shastri replied, "The Brāhmaṇa part is an inseparable part of the Vedas, and any slight shown to it amounts to slighting the Vedas. Such a show of disregard is a gigantic sin like consuming wine."[63] He then read out the contents of his book *Dayanand Kaṇṭakoddhāraka,* which carried the answers to the five questions enlisted above, aimed at establishing the view-point of the Pandits, and condemning the beliefs of Dayanand. The Shastri then secured on these answers, the signatures of the Pandits, present there.[64]

***Answers to the Samiti's Questions***

The information regarding what had transpired in the meeting at Calcutta was given to the Swami by one of his devotees, Kripa Ram. In response to the communication, Swamiji wrote back: "I don't have time enough for writing and getting printed my

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reaction to those who had questioned my ideas and principles, as much work still remains to be done regarding the commentary on the Vedas. However, if you have the time, you may undertake the task of writing and getting the response printed."[65] Accordingly, a reply was sent by Arya Samaj, Lahore[66] which was published in Urdu under the heading '*Rasālā, ek Arya*'. This reply might have been sent in consultation with and concurrence of the Swami.[67]

The answers given by the Aryas to the five questions were briefly as follows:

Answer to the First Question: The so-called Yajurvedic citation, viz., *Yatkincamanurabravīttad bheṣajam bheṣajatāyāḥ*, given by Subrahmanya Shastri regarding the Manusmriti, does not even figure anywhere in the Yajurveda. It is for this reason that the Shastri has not mentioned any details regarding the chapter and hymn number of the quote. In fact the aforementioned sentence is from the *Sāmaveda Brāhmaṇa* which means whatever has been said by Manu regarding *Karma Kāṇḍa* (religious rituals) is like the medicine of medicines. Secondly: Are the Vedas incomplete, so as to necessitate supplementary material from the Manusmriti? The statements made in the Manusmriti which are in consonance with the Vedic beliefs are acceptable. But selfish people have interpolated a number of episodes and ideas, which are in violation of Vedic tenets, and can by no means be accepted. The very question regarding Brāhmaṇic part of the Vedas being of equal value has been phrased incorrectly. The correct question should have been: Does the Brāhmaṇic portion of the Vedas enjoy independent evidential status and determinative value, or not? Based on Maharshi Jaimini's *Pūrva Mīmānsā,* it is clear that *Vidhi* stands for the Brāhmaṇic part. As a matter of fact the portion which carries an exposition of the principles enunciated in the Vedas is the Brāhmaṇic portion. Besides, the words *mantra* and *Vidhi* are not synonymous.[68]

Subrahmanya Shastri has quoted the verse *Vividhaścaupaniṣadīrātmasaṇsiddhaye śrutiḥ* (विविधाश्चौपनिषदीरात्मसंसिद्धये श्रुतिः), and given an incorrect interpretation. The sense and substance of this verse is that a Brahman should start residing in the forests for the purgation of the self, and carry out a self-study of the *Brahma Vidyā.* The word *Aupaniṣadī* (औपनिषदी) is an adjective here and the word *Śrutiḥ* (श्रुतिः) is the predicate.

*Vedo'khilo dharmamūlam smṛtiśile ca tadvidām,* a quote by Manu has been cited as evidence for establishing the authenticity of the Smritis. This sentence means: the Vedas are the primordial source of all dharma and the basic source of dharma for mankind is the knowledge and conduct of the scholars of the Vedas. Manu himself says that the Smritis which run counter to the postulates of the Vedas or those sects of faith which uphold atheism are all worthless and full of *tamoguṇa.* They cannot be given the status of evidential scriptures. If there is a contradiction among the Vedas, Smritis and Purāṇas, the Vedic beliefs will enjoy the evidential and deciding status. In case of a conflict between Smritis and Purāṇās, the tenets of Smritis will over-rule those of Purāṇās.[69]

Answer to the Second Question: In the issue raised here, the worship of idols of Shiva, Viṣṇu, Durgā and other gods and goddesses has been justified. It has also been stated that *shrāddha* observed in the honour and memory of forefathers for getting rid

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of sins by bathing at the places of pilgrimages such as the Ganga are all in consonance with the scriptural precepts.

The hymn of the Ṛgveda cited by Subrahmanya, viz. *Tava śriye maruto marjayanta rudra yatte janima cāru citram,* does not carry any word which may mean Śivaliṅga.[70] Further, this argument is completely misplaced that a citation from *Kaivalyopaniṣad* in the first chapter of the Satyarth Prakash by Swami Dayanand is tantamount to providing the evidential respect to even the Upaniṣads which don't merit venerability. Swami has quoted only *Sa brahmā sa viṣṇuḥ* from that book because it upholds monotheism which enjoys the sanction of the Vedas. However, it should not mean that the Swami has accepted Upaniṣads as of evidential value.

Words like Mahadev and others, used in *Baudhāyana Sūtras* signify God and not Śivaliṅga. *Devatāyatanāni kampante daivatapratimā hasantītyādīni* and other such lines in some books do not prove that idolatry enjoys the sanction of the Vedas.

In two of the verses from the Manusmriti[71] referred to in the question under discussion, there is a mention of building temples at borders between two villages, of marking of these borders and of deciding border disputes. The purpose of building temples on the borders is that people fear violating borders because that will entail the destruction of the temples.[72] So, *Pratimānāṁ ca bhedakaḥ* (प्रतिमानां च भेदकः) refers to one who violates the dividing lines or the dividing installations such as temples. If the word *pratimā* which here means erected structure has been used in this context, it should not lead us to conclude that Manusmriti condones or sanctions idolatry.[73]

Even if it is conceded that the word *pratimā* here stands not for division marking symbols but for idols, it does not prove that idolatry has been approved of in Vedic literature.[74] It has been clearly stated in the Vedas that God is Omnipresent and there is no idol or image of Him.[75]

It has been emphasised in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* that those who ignoring God, and worship any other so called god and whom they ignorantly believe to be God are like knowledgeable beasts.[76] It has been said even in the *Shrimadbhāgavata,* "Those who imagine the presence of God in the idols made of earth, stone, metal, wood, etc. are only nitwits, and are only undergoing pain and misery by undertaking such tiresomely futile exercises. They never attain real peace and tranquility.[77] Thus there is no sanctioned provision of idolatry in the Vedas and other holy scriptures.

The hymn supposedly from the Ṛgveda, viz., *Sitāsite saritau yatra saṅgate tatra plutāso divamutpatanti* cited in support of the contention that bathing in the Ganga and other places of pilgrimage brings *pāpamukti,* in fact, does not figure anywhere in the Ṛgveda. There is no mention of the Ganga in this Veda, or for that matter in any of the other Vedas. Instead, there is a mention of *idā* and *piṅgalā* nerves at a place where the point of discussion is how *Prāṇāyāma* (breathing exercises) and *dhyāna* (concentration) lead to salvation. However, it is true that in the treatises on Yoga and other related subjects *idā* etc. have clearly been called Ganga and Yamuna, as in: *Iḍa bhagavatī gaṅgā piṅglā yamunā nadī.*[78] Besides, it is also worth noting what Manu has to say in this connection: *Yamo vaivasvato devo yastavaiṣa hradi sthitaḥ. Tena cedavivādaste mā gaṅgāṁ mā kurūn gamaḥ.*[79] This means that God who exists in the form of brightness and energy

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is inside you, if you are not in conflict with God you need not go to Kurukshetra or the Ganga. As a matter of fact, here going to Ganga and Kurukshetra has been, implicitly prohibited. There is no mention at all of the provision of bathing at these places.[80]

In the evidential hymn *Nivītammanusyāṇāṁ prācināvītaṁ pitṛṇaṁ...* (निवीतम्मनुष्याणां प्राचीनावीतं पितृणाम्...), cited by the other party in favour of its contention that *shrāddhas* should be observed in the honour of dead forefathers, there is in fact no mention of dead forefathers or of displaying any honour to them through *shrāddhas.* Only changing the position of the *yajñopavīta* from right to left does not prove that *shrāddhas* are in consonance with the Vedic principles. The word *pitṛṇāṁ* (पितृणाम्) carrying a plural suffix does not signify fore-parents. In Sanskrit, plural forms of words are used to show respect to somebody as per an aphorism in grammar, viz., *Ādrārthe bahuvacanam* (आदरार्थे बहुवचनम्).

As per Swami Dayanand, the care and consideration that is extended to fore-parents with a sense of devotion during their lifetime is called *shrāddha,* and whatever is done for their satisfaction and contentment is called *tarpan.*

Answer to the Third Question: The rival group has asserted in their meeting that the word *agni* (अग्नि) in the hymn *Agnimīle...* signifies temporal fire and not God. In support of their contention they have cited the *rathakar* episode from *Mīmānsā Darśana* which does not accept the root-meaning of words. The matter is that both the root-meaning and the conventional or traditional meaning of a word are acceptable as per the context. Swami Dayanand has shed considerable light on this in many of his books including *Bhrāntiniwaran,* citing forceful evidence. Six words including *agni* are all synonyms of God as per aphorism *Agnirdraviṇodā-aśvo-vāyuḥ śyeno'śvinau saṭ iti.*[81] God is *agni* and soul is *agni.*[82] This makes it clear that the word *agni* stands for God also.

Answer to the Fourth Question: Citing the hymn *Agnihotraṁ juhūyātsvargakāmaḥ jyotiṣṭomena svargakāmo yajeta,* the rival side has asserted that the performance of *agnihotra,* etc. leads one to the attainment of *Svarga.* In this hymn the attainment of *Svarga* signifies the attainment of happiness, an interpretation supported by the relevant dictionary. Never should the attainment of *Svarga* be interpreted as the attainment of a resting place which is imaginatively believed by the Paurāṇic concept to be a place for the fulfilment of base human desires. *Agnihotra* leads to the purification and purgation of air which further leads to health generating real happiness.

Answer to the Fifth Question: Who is responsible for disregarding and slighting the Vedas? Both sides regard the Vedas as a Godly composition and hence of independent evidential value. However, one of the sides regards only the Samhitā part of the Vedas of primary determinative and evidential value. It considers the Brāhmaṇic part only of the secondary value, as it teaches how to pray to and meditate on God on the basis of the interpretation of the Vedas. On the other hand, the other side considers the Veda Samhitā tagged with the Brāhmaṇic part in their composite form as of full evidential value and thus expresses faith in idolatry, in several incarnations of God, in observing *Shrāddhas* of the dead fore-parents, in visiting the places of pilgrimage such as the Ganga, etc., in the worship of idols made of stones, etc., such as *Śivaliṅga, Śāligrāma,* etc. The former side throws open the study and teaching of the Vedas for the welfare of

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the whole mankind whereas the latter side regards the Vedas as their parental property and wants to keep them confined to themselves only. Thus it is very clear before the intelligentsia as to which side is showing venerability and which side disrespect to the Vedas.

It is quite apparent that without serious deliberation and judgement of truth, the aim of the assembly held at Calcutta was to have a self-willed resolution passed against Swami Dayanand by securing the signatures of some eminent persons of the city.

## CONCLUSION

Influenced by Swami Dayanand's shāstrārthas, question-answer sessions, sermons, conversations and teachings, millions joined the Arya Samaj in India and abroad, in his life-time and later. It is due to his teachings that thousands quit idolatry and began to worship and pray to God as per Vedic instructions; the five types of *yajñas* became widely popular; education in India started being imparted to all without any discrimination; Vedas started being read and taught disseminating Vedic Knowledge and Vedic Lore; people began believing in righteous deeds keeping in mind the Karmic theory of reward and retribution, and gave up blind faith. Swami Dayanand thus paved the path of spiritual, social, political and economic progress of India.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Nirukta, 1.20; ....उपदेशाय ग्लायन्तोऽवरे बिल्मग्रहणायेमं ग्रन्थं समाम्नासिषुः। वेदं च वेदांगानि च। cf. Bhagavaddatta, January 2004, *Nirukta Śāstram*, Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Revali, Sonepat, pp. 64-65.
2. *Brihadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, chapter III
3. Swami Dayanand, *Satyarth Prakash*, Arsh Sahitya Prachar Trust, Delhi, pp. 256-257.
4. (a) Raghunandan Singh Nirmal, *Dayanand Shāstrārth Saṅgraha tathā Viśeṣa Śankā-Samādhān*, Arsh Sahitya Prachar Trust, Delhi, second edition, different pages;
   (b) Bhawani Lal Bhartiya, *Nav Jāgran ke Purodhā Maharshi Dayanand* Saraswati, Appendix 5.
5. For details see Raghunandan Singh Nirmal, *op. cit.*, and any *Life Story of Maharshi Dayanand.*
6. Bhawani Lal Bhartiya, 2009, *Nav Jāgran ke Purodhā Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati*, Ghudmal Prahladkumar Arya Dharmarth Trust, Hindon, p. 295
7. Bhawani Lal Bhartiya, *Kashi Shāstrārtha mein Upasthit Pauranic Vidvān*, published in *Vedavāṇī Dayanand special issue* (2), March 5, 1985, pp. 42-47
8. Bhawani Lal Bhartiya, *Nav Jāgran ke Purodhā Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati*, pp. 304-304; *Kashi Shāstrārtha*, Vedic Pustakalaya, Kesarganj, Ajmer, 1956.
9. *Tanḍya Brāhmaṇa*, 23.16.6; यद् वै किञ्चन मनुरवदद् भेषजं भेषजतायै।
10. *Vedānta Darśana*, 2.2.1; रचनानुपपत्तेश्चनानुमानम्।
11. *Vitaṇḍā* is defined as: स एव स्वपक्षस्थापनाहीनो वितण्डा। सा च परपक्षदूषणमात्रपर्यवसाना। नास्य वैतण्डिकस्य स्थाप्यः पक्षोऽस्ति, *Tarkabhāṣā* (exposition by Gajanan Shastri, 1995), Varanasi, p. 588.
12. *Manusmriti*, 6.92
13. Bhawani Lal Bhartiya, *Nav Jāgran ke Purodhā Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati*, p 305.
14. *Ṣaḍviṇśa Brāhmaṇa*, 5.9; देवतायतनानि कम्पन्ते दैवतप्रतिमा हसन्तीत्यादीनि. The word *pratimā* occurs in *Yajurveda*, 14.18, 15.65, 32.3; *Ṛgveda*, 10.130.3; *Atharvaveda*, 8.9.6, 9.4.2.
15. Raghunandan Singh Nirmal, *op.cit.*, p. 23.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

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17. Dayanand Saraswati, 2012, *Dayanand Granthmālā*, part 3, Kesarganj, Ajmer, p. 463.
18. (a) Raghunandan Singh Nirmal, *op. cit.*, p. 25.
    (b) The word *purāṇa* has been used as adjective in Gita, 2.20; अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणः; मालविकाग्निमित्रम्; 1.2 , पुराणमित्येव न साधु सर्वं न चापि काव्यं नवमित्यवद्यम्।
19. Raghunandan Singh Nirmal, *op. cit.*, p. 26; यज्ञसमाप्तौ सत्यां दशमे दिवसे पुराणानां पाठं शृणुयात्।
20. See *The Hindu Patriot*, January 17, 1870; *The Christian Intelligencer*, March 1870.
21. Bhawani Lal Bhartiya, *Nav Jāgran ke Purodhā Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati*, p. 311.
22. Raghunandan Singh Nirmal, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-40.
23. *Yogadarśana*, 1.35; विषयवती वा प्रवृत्तिरुत्पन्ना मनसः स्थितिनिबन्धिनी
24. Raghunandan Nirmal, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-47; *Hoogly Shāstrārtha*, Kesarganj, Ajmer, 1995.
25. Raghunandan Singh Nirmal, *op. cit.*, pp. 118-114; Shāstrārtha Jalandhar, Vedic Pustakalaya, Dayanand Ashram, Kesarganj, Ajmer, 1995.
26. (a) *Ṛgveda*, 1.164.20; द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परि षस्वजाते। तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्त्यनश्नन्नन्यो अभि चाकशीति।
    (b) *Yajurveda*, 40.8; शाश्वतीभ्यः समाभ्यः।
    (c) *Śavetāśvarataropaniṣad*, 4.5; अजामेकां लोहितशुक्लकृष्णां बह्वीः प्रजाः सृजमानां सरूपाः। (त्रिगुणात्मिका प्रकृति अज अर्थात् अनादि है।)
    (d) *Gītā*, 13.20; प्रकृतिं पुरुषं चैव विद्धयनादि उभावपि ।
27. *Sāmkhyakārikā*, 42; प्रकृतेर्विभुत्वयोगान्नटवत् व्यवतिष्ठते लिंगम्।
28. *Yogadarśana*, 2.12; क्लेशमूलः कर्माशयो दृष्टादृष्टजन्मवेदनीयः। Maharshi Vyāsa writes on this sūtra, कर्माशयः- पुण्यापुण्यकर्माशयः क्लेशमूलः – कामक्रोधलोभ-प्रभवः स दृष्टजन्मवेदनीयः अदृष्टजन्मवेदनीयश्च अर्थात् अन्तःकरण में जो पुण्यपापमय कर्मसंस्कार हैं, उसका फल वर्त्तमान जन्म तथा अगले जन्म में भोग्य होता है।
29. (a) *Yogadarśana*, 1.13; सति मूले तद्विपाको जात्यायुर्भोगाः। (b) *Samkhyadarśana*, 6.41; कर्मवैचित्र्यात् सृष्टिवैचित्र्यम्।
30. Also see Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati, May 2005, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā*, Arsh Sahitya Prachar Trust, Delhi, p. 158; Atharvaveda, 7.6.67.1; *Gita*, 6.43.
31. *Qur'ān*, Surat Kayāmat, 75 last Āyat.
32. Raghunandan Singh Nirmal, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-123.
33. Lakshman Aryopadeshak, *Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati Sampuran Jivan Charitra*, part 2, (Tr. Rajendra Jigyasu, 2013), p. 318; Satyanand Swami, August 1990, *Srimaddayanandprakash*, Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, New Delhi, p. 322.
34. Satyanand Swami, *op. cit.*, p. 323.
35. For *Saguṇa* and *nirguṇa* see *Swamantavyāmantavyaprakāsh*; Please see Swami Dayanand, *Satyarth Prakash*, 2005, Arya Prakashan, Ajmeri Gate, Delhi, pp. 758-759.
36. Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati, *Dayanand Granthmālā*, part 3, pp. 542-552.
37. *Ibid.*, pp. 552-565.
38. For details, please see *Shāstrārtha Bareilly*, Vedic Pustakalaya, Dayanand Ashram, Kesarganj, Ajmer, 1995.
39. www.aryamantavya.in; www.paropkarinisabha.com.
40. Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati, *Dayanand Granthmālā*, part 3, pp. 581-582.
41. Raghunandan Singh Nirmal, *op. cit.*, pp. 154-161; Shāstrārtha Ajmer, Vedic Pustakalaya, Dayanand Ashram, Kesarganj, Ajmer, 1995.
42. Raghunandan Singh Nirmal, *op. cit.*, pp. 230-239; Shāstrārtha Masuda, Vedic Pustakalaya, Dayanand Ashram, Kesarganj, Ajmer, 1995.
43. Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati, *Dayanand Granthmālā*, part 3, pp. 629-684.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 639.
45. Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash*, p. 18. It is clearly stated in *Manusmriti*, 12.122; प्रशासितारं सर्वेषामणीयांसमणोरपि।
46. *Manusmriti*, 6.29
47. *Ibid.*, 2.6; वेदोऽखिलो धर्ममूलं स्मृतिशीले च तद्विदाम्

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48. Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati, *Dayanand Granthmālā*, part 3, pp. 640-641.
49. *Ṛgveda*, 5.3.3; तव श्रिये मरुतो मर्जयन्त रुद्र यत्ते जनिम चारु चित्रम्
50. Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati, *Dayanand Granthmālā*, part 3, p. 641.
51. *Ibid.*; अहं सन्निहितस्तत्र पाषाणप्रतिमादिषु। क्षेत्रेऽस्मिन् योऽर्चयेद् भक्त्या मन्त्रेणानेन मां शिव॥
52. *Manusmriti*, 2.176; नित्यं स्नात्वा शुचिः कुर्याद्देवर्षिपितृतर्पणम्। देवतानामर्चनं चैव समिधादानमेव च ॥
53. Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati, *Dayanand Granthmālā*, part 3, p. 642; महादेवं महापुरुषं वार्चयेत्
54. Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash*, p. 18; स ब्रह्मा स विष्णुः स रुद्रस्स शिवः।
55. *Manusmriti*, 9.285; प्रतिमानां च भेदकः
56. Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati, *Dayanand Granthmālā*, part 3, p. 645.
57. *Ibid.*, p. 645.
58. *Ibid.*, p. 646; सितासिते सरितौ यत्र संगते तत्र प्लुतासो दिवमुत्पतन्ति। ये वै तन्वा विसृजन्ति धीराः ते जनासोऽमृतत्वं भजन्ते॥
59. *Ṛgveda*, 10.75.5; इमं मे गंगे यमुने.....
60. *Manusmriti*, 8.92; तेन चेदविवादस्ते मा गंगां मा कुरून् गमः।
61. *Ṛgveda*, 1.1.1; अग्निमीळे.....
62. Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati, *Dayanand Granthmālā*, part 3, p. 647; अग्निहोत्रं जुहुयात्स्वर्गकामः ज्योतिष्टोमेन स्वर्गकामो यजेत।
63. *Manusmriti*, 11.56; ब्रह्मोज्झता वेदनिन्दा कौटसाक्ष्यं सुहृद्वधः। गर्हितानाद्ययोर्जग्धिः सुरापानसमानि षट्॥
64. Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati, *Dayanand Granthmālā*, part 3, p. 648.
65. Bhagavaddatta, *Maharshi Dayanand ke Patra aur Vijñapan*, part 2, 3rd edition, p. 493.
66. It is wrongly mentioned in *Dayanand Granthmālā*, part 3, p. 631, Kesarganj, Ajmer, 2012 that the reply was sent by Arya Samaj, Calcutta. The Calcutta Samaj was not in existence at that time. It was established in 1885 (Editor).
67. Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati, *Dayanand Granthmālā*, part 3, p. 632.
68. *Mīmānsā Darśana*, 2.1.31, 33
69. *Manusmriti*, 12.95; या वेदबाह्याः स्मृतयो याश्च काश्च कुदृष्टयः। सर्वास्ता निष्फलाः प्रेत्य तमोनिष्ठा हि ताः स्मृताः॥ *Vedavyāssmṛti*, 1.4; श्रुतिस्मृतिपुराणानां विरोधो यत्र दृश्यते। तत्र श्रौतं प्रमाणन्तु तयोर्द्वैधे स्मृतिर्वरा॥
70. Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati, *Dayanand Granthmālā*, part 3, pp. 658-659.
71. *Manusmriti*, सीमासन्धिषु कार्याणि देवतायतनानि च। (8.248); संक्रमध्वजयष्टीनां प्रतिमानां च भेदकः। (9.285)
72. Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati, *Dayanand Granthmālā*, part 3, p. 661.
73. *Ibid.*, p. 664.
74. *Ibid.*, p. 662.
75. *Yajurveda*, 40.8; स पर्यगाच्छुक्रमकायमव्रणमस्नाविरं शुद्धम्। *Yajurveda*, 32.3; न तस्य प्रतिमा अस्ति।
76. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, 14.4; आत्मेत्येवोपासीत.... योऽन्यां देवतामुपास्ते न स वेद यथा पशुरेव स देवतानाम्।
77. Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati, *Dayanand Granthmālā*, part 3, p. 665. It is clearly stated in *Srimadbhāgavatapurāṇa*; मृच्छिलाधातुदार्वादिमूर्तावीश्वरबुद्धयः। क्लिश्यन्ति तपसा मूढाः परां शान्तिं न यान्ति ते ॥
78. *Haṭhyoga Pradīpikā*, 2.110; इडा भगवती गंगा पिंगला यमुना नदी
79. *Manusmriti*, 8.92; यमो वैवस्वतो देवो यस्तवैष हृदि स्थितः। तेन चेदविवादस्ते मा गंगां मा कुरुन् गमः॥
80. Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati, *Dayanand Granthmālā*, part 3, p. 667.
81. *Nighaṇṭu*, chapter 5; अग्निर्द्रविणोदा-अश्वो-वायुः श्येनोऽश्विनौ षट् इति
82. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, 2.2.11, 2.3.2

(Translated from Hindi to English by Khazan Singh Gulia)

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# SECTION II
# Arya Samaj and its Scholars

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# CHAPTER 6

# Arya Samaj: Its Context, Emergence and the Initial Years

*Ram Prakash*

## THE CONTEXT

In the nineteenth century, the Hindu[1] society suffered from various ills, such as female-infanticide, polygamy, superstitions, idolatry, polytheism, gurudom, untouchability, satī and *devadāsī* customs, widespread illiteracy and poverty. Child marriage was the order of the day. Little wonder then that some people taunted us, as the 'children of children'! This obnoxious custom led to a large number of widows. Worse, they were forced to immolate themselves on the pyres of their dead husbands. The inhuman killing was legitimised and glorified by giving the status of a satī to the victim. Female-infanticide prevailed to an alarming extent in Central and Western India. "In some villages there was scarcely any girl to be seen; in others there were four or five times as many boys as girls, all the rest having been destroyed."[2] In the South, many girls were dedicated to the service of gods as *devadāsīs* in the temples. Illiteracy was rampant, and very few received any education at all.[3] Not to speak of studying the Vedas, the Shudras, termed untouchables, were not even permitted to hear a hymn. Idols had already dethroned God and idolatry had become the dominant form of worship. The superstitious Hindus worshipped various idols, tombs, trees, rivers, snakes or whatever they chose.

Moreover, the Indians in general, and the Hindus in particular, were victims of an inferiority complex, resulting from centuries of Muslim rule. It became more pronounced under the impact of the British Raj and western culture. Educated Hindus, the worst victims of this complex, had lost all respect for India's glorious past.

This was a fertile ground for the Christian missionaries to reap a rich harvest, and their campaign was aided by the British bureaucracy. Consequently, the Christian

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population increased by leaps and bounds. While the total population of India increased at the rate of 1.5 per cent during 1891-1901, the population of native Christians grew by over 30 per cent.[4] Even then, the British rule was perceived by some, as better and safer than the earlier one of the Muslims.

The Hindu society saw some sincere attempts at social reform. Brahmo Samaj, Prārthanā Samaj and the like were started by people interested in the uplift of the masses. Though both favoured women's' education and widow-remarriage, these movements did not meet the needs of the Hindu society, which had deep cultural roots and faith in the scriptures. Brahmo Samaj was deeply influenced by the English education and western culture. It was neither interested in Sanskrit education nor in the study of the Vedas. So much so that Raja Rammohan Roy, the founder of Brahmo Samaj was surprised to see Friedrich Rosen copying manuscripts of the *Ṛgveda* at the British Museum, and advised him not to waste his time on the hymns.[5] The principles of Prārthanā Samaj were largely similar to those of Brahmo Samaj. Non-idolatrous theism, rejection of trans-migration of soul and infallible revelation and eclecticism in the use of religious texts from Hindu and non-Hindu traditions were some of the similarities.

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, some reformers at Bombay (now Mumbai) realised that social reform alone divided the society, and hence they sought to combine it with religious reform. Karsondas Mulji[6] was one such prominent personality. He was born into the Kapole Baniya caste and was a follower of the Vallabhāchārya sect. Having been initiated into this sect right in his childhood, he received the sacred *mantra* and the *kaṇṭhi* and paid regular visits to the temple of Mahārāj Jivanji. As an adolescent, he noticed certain immoral practices in this sect. "He saw the Mahārāj pressing the toes of some female devotee who then followed him into his private quarters; he saw the guru throwing coloured powder over women's breasts during the Holi festival; he saw people devoutly drinking the water wrung out from the Mahārāj's loincloth after his bath, or ecstatically chewing the leavings of his food or his betel nut."[7] Disillusioned, he stopped visiting the temple, as he could no longer accept the *guru* as an incarnation of Krishna. An article '*The Primitive Religion of the Hindus and the present Heterodox Opinions*' written by him in 1860, became the document accused of libel in the Mahārāj case in which a leading *guru* of the sect sued him.[8] Lakhmidas Khimji, Thakarshi Narayanji and Mathuradas Lavajee were the major witnesses for the defence. He won the case but had to hire the services of an orientalist, Dr. John Wilson, as he himself was not a Sanskrit scholar. In fact, he was no theological thinker but only an enthusiastic popular moralist. He and his followers later laboured hard to understand authentic Hinduism. They favoured calling Hinduism as Arya Dharma and were of the view that the Vedas and not the Purāṇas may be the basis of true Hinduism.

Around the same time, a scholar from Gujarat, Dayanand Saraswati, 'a large, powerful man with striking features and remarkable voice'[9] was touring the country, delivering lectures on the correct interpretation of the Vedas, fighting orthodoxy and social evils, declaring that idol worship had no sanction in the Vedas, announcing that everyone including women and the Shudras had the right to study the Vedas, denouncing the Purāṇas and thus giving a call to his people to go 'back to the Vedas' because they contained the seed for a radical new birth of the Indian nation. He drew

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huge crowds wherever he went. The people were impressed by the divine visage, the radiance of *brahmacharya* and his mesmerising personality. Despite significant success, he knew quite well that without winning a decisive battle at Kashi, all his efforts would be meaningless. So he reached Kashi (Banaras) in November 1869[10] and a *shāstrārtha* (disputation) was announced. This famous *shāstrārtha*[11] took place at Anand Bagh near Durgakund on Kartik Shukla 12, Samvat 1926 Vikrami (November 16, 1869). Dayanand challenged an entire army of about 300 Paurāṇic Pandits including Pandit Taracharan, Swami Vishuddhanand, Madhvacharya and Bal Shastri, to quote any Vedic mantra in support of idol worship. Finding it impossible to overcome the great man in the debate, the pandits resorted to a sinister course of action to end the *shāstrārtha.* They raised pandemonium and their paid ruffians pelted stones at the victor.[12] However, this disputation established Dayanand as a Vedic scholar without parallel. Dayanand paid six more visits to Kashi, and on each occasion challenged the Paurāṇic Pandits to cite any authority from the Vedas in support of idol worship, which they never could.

In those days, polytheism and idol worship were bitterly attacked by the non-Hindus. The orthodox Hindus were unable to defend the ridiculous forms and rides (*Vāhans*) of the idols, types of offering made and various peculiar customs and practices. Dayanand blunted the attack by pleading pure Vedic monotheism and rejecting idol worship through a logical interpretation of the Vedas in conformity with the interpretations by the ancient *rishis.* This helped in restoring considerable self-respect, in the depressed community and saved the Hindus from religious and national effacement.

Two businessmen from Bombay, Lakhmidas Khimji's brother Dharmsi and Jaikishendas Jivanram were also present in the audience listening to the *shāstrārtha* at Kashi. Both were opposed to the Vallabhāchāryas and were deeply impressed by Dayanand's vehement opposition to idolatry, his conviction that true Hindu religion lay in the Vedas and not the Purāṇas, and his command over the Sanskrit language and the scriptures. In him, they found the culmination of their search. They requested the Swami to visit Bombay. However, Swamiji could visit the city only half a decade later, on October 20, 1874. He launched a campaign against the powerful Vallabhāchārya sect and declared that it was not in conformity with the ancient doctrines of Hinduism. He announced that the Purāṇas and the Tantras had no authority at all and were unfit to be regarded as religious books. He maintained that Bhāgavata-purāṇa was neither written by the seer Vyāsa, nor was it authentic. He also criticised the sect on moral grounds. To him, Lord Krishna was an *āptapuruṣa*[13] (pious soul) and so the myth of his amorous acts was abhorrent to him.

Swamiji had not come to Bombay with a view to establish an organisation, but the people there requested him to give his work an organisational form, to meet the need of the hour. Undoubtedly, Dayanand was by now fully equipped to set up an organisation. Satyarth Prakash was now available in print to acquaint the people of his views on various subjects. *Pañcamahāyajñavidhi* or the prayer-book was also available. In addition, he had commenced work on his monumental *Vedabhāshya.* After holding several meetings, Swamiji agreed to frame a set of rules for the proposed society. By this

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time, the casteists and the orthodox started opposing the move and the idea of founding a society had to be postponed for a while. Swamiji too was in no hurry.

Meanwhile, an Arya Samaj was established at Rajkot, the land of his birth, in January 1875 with some thirty members, all from the Prārthanā Samaj. This Samaj once invited Pandit Gattulal to demonstrate his ability to compose Sanskrit verses extempore. He did so, but in the process composed a verse about the dethronement of the Gaekwad of Baroda by the British. This got published and the political agent threatened the office-bearers of the Samaj, mostly government servants, with dismissal. They were much alarmed, and the Samaj was disbanded within six months.

## THE EMERGENCE OF ARYA SAMAJ

On Swami Dayanand's return to Bombay, Panachand Anandji Parekh was entrusted the work of rewriting the rules in consultation with the Swami and with his approval. It was decided that an organisation by the name of Arya Samaj be constituted. On Saturday April 10, 1875 at 6:30pm, a public meeting was held at Girgaun Mohalla in the garden of Dr. Manakji Aderji, with Girdharilal Dyaldas Kothari in the chair. The establishment of the Arya Samaj was formally announced[14] and twenty-eight principles were laid down in the meeting. Members of the Arya Samaj were carefully enrolled. Most of them were men of commitment and eminence already engaged in the struggle against the Vallabhāchārya sect. Girdharilal Dyaldas Kothari, Thakarshi Narayanji,[15] Panachand Anandji Parekh and Sevaklal Karsondas were declared as the President, Vice-president, Secretary and Treasurer respectively. Liladhar Hari, Sunderdas Dharmsi, Pranjivandas Vadhasji, Ramdas s/o Chhabildas Lallu Bhai, Ganesh Shrikrishna Khaparde and Shyamji Krishnavarma[16] were among the members. Lakhmidas Khimji and Mathuradas Lavajee supported the Swami in every way.

Swami Dayanand was against gurudom in principle and practice. Nor was he in favour of establishing an independent sect.[17] He was committed to preaching the teachings of the Vedas. So in his address to the members of the new Samaj, he made his intention very clear:

> *Bhai*, I have no independent *mat* (opinion or sect). I am governed by the Vedas... I am a Sannyasi. I eat your food and in return it is my duty to preach fearlessly what I understand as truth. I am not running after fame. Anyone may praise me or speak ill of me, (but) I preach truth recognising it as my duty whether anybody accepts it or not, it does not mean any loss or gain to me... If you are able to achieve something for the good of mankind by a Samaj through your efforts, then establish a Samaj; I will not stand in your way. But if you do not organise it properly, there will be a lot of trouble in the future. As for me, I will only instruct you in the same way as I preach to others, and this much you should keep in mind: my beliefs are not independent, and I am not omniscient. Therefore, if in future any error of mine be discovered, then set it right after rational examination. If you do not act that way, then this Samaj too will later on become just a sect. This is the way by which so many sectarian divisions have

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> become prevalent in India: by making the guru's word the touchstone of truth and thus fostering deep-seated prejudices which make people religion-blind, cause quarrels, and destroy all true knowledge. That is the way India arrived at her sorry contemporary state, and that is the way this Samaj too would grow to be just another sect. This is my belief: even if there be many different sectarian beliefs prevalent in India, if only they all acknowledge the Vedas, then all those small rivers will re-unite in the ocean of Vedic wisdom, and the unity of *dharma* will come about. This would lead to worldly and behavioural reform.[18]

The twenty-eight rules of the Arya Samaj, though not properly classified and arranged, were significant indeed. These included articles of faith, rules of business, the code of conduct for the members and guidelines for the functioning of the office-bearers. Every member was required to accept the self-evident authority of the Vedas (rule 2) and to have a firm belief in the existence of one and only one God described by about twenty-five adjectives (rule 14). All sacraments and rites were to be performed according to the Vedas (rule 15). The membership was open to both men and women (rule 6). Only principled persons of good character, concerned with the welfare of all, were entitled to become members (rule 1 and 8). Anyone, who indulged in a wicked deed, could be removed from the membership after due deliberation (rule 24). That Arya schools, separate for boys and girls, be established everywhere (rule 20) underlined the importance given to education. A weekly periodical was also to be published (rule 5).

In summary:

1. Dayanand did not make any compromise on principles. Had he agreed to drop his insistence on the Vedas, the whole of Prārthanā Samaj would have converted to Arya Samaj at Bombay.
2. Dayanand did not declare himself (or allow anyone to declare him) the supremo, guru or patron of the Samaj. He refused to accept any office or title in the Arya Samaj and agreed to be enrolled only as an ordinary member with his name appearing in the proper alphabetical order at serial number 31 in the list of the members of the Bombay Arya Samaj.[19]
3. The Arya Samaj became the first ever religious movement to be founded and run on purely democratic lines. This dealt a death blow to any possibility of gurudom or sect formation even in the future.
4. All the basic conditions which play an important role in the emergence of a sect were intentionally avoided in the principles of the Samaj.
5. Even at a later stage, Dayanand Saraswati clearly specified in his will that his body be cremated[20] and not buried as per the prevalent Hindu customs for the Sannyāsīs as he feared that his tomb may be worshipped later.

After establishing the Arya Samaj at Bombay, Swamiji visited Ahmedabad and Pune and then returned to the North. At Banaras, he arranged for the publication of *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā* in monthly fascicules at Lazarus Press. Another important stop-over was at Chandapur (U.P.) where a religious discussion with the representatives of

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the Muslims, Christians and Hindus was organised during a fair in March 1877. Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanawtawi, the founder of Deoband School and Maulavi Sayyid Abdul Mansur of Delhi represented the Muslims, while Rev. T.J. Scott, missionary of the American Methodist Episcopal Church and Rev. E.W. Parker were the spokespersons of Christianity.[21]

The city of Ludhiana, a prominent Christian centre at that time, was the first place in Punjab that Swamiji visited, on the invitation of Munshi Kanaiyalal Alakhdhari, an independent thinker and crusader. He preached there for about twenty days and then left for Lahore (now in Pakistan) where he reached on April 19, 1877. His stay was arranged in Diwan Ratanchand's garden. His first two lectures at the Baoli Sahib, witnessed much rowdyism. The Lahore Brahmo Samaj relished the denunciation of idol worship and placed its hall at Swamiji's disposal. The offer was gratefully accepted. However, the lectures on 'Vedic Revelation' and 'Trans-migration of the Soul' could not be to their liking. Much pressure was then built on Diwan Ratanchand's son to withdraw the accommodation provided to Swamiji. He succumbed to the pressure and asked Swamiji to leave.[22]

Finally, Swamiji shifted to the Kothi of Khan Bahadur Dr. Rahim Khan. It goes to his credit that having once placed the Kothi at the disposal of Swamiji, he did not behave like the Brahmo-samajists and the Hindus, even though Islam was one of the topics of the lectures. It was here at Khan Sahib's residence that Arya Samaj, Lahore, was formally inaugurated on June 24, 1878. Twenty-two members were enrolled with Rai Mulraj as the President and Lala Sain Das, Lala Jivan Das and Babu Sarda Prasad Bhattacharya as Secretaries. The first meeting of the Samaj was held at Rahim Khan's Kothi and the next two at Sat Sabha Hall, after which a place was secured on rent in Anarkali Bazar for future meetings. The twenty-eight principles drafted at Bombay were revised. The rules of procedure and of conduct were excluded from those dealing with the question of belief, moral principles and directives. All practical and organisational matters were arranged into a properly ordered set of by-laws. These ten principles and the by-laws so recast[23] were adopted by the Bombay Samaj also.

In this context, Lala Lajpat Rai rightly observed, "The teachings of Dayanand, though not embodied in the principles of the Arya Samaj, constitute its creed for all practical purposes. The teachings of Dayanand are, in their turn, the teachings of the ancient sages of India based on the Vedas."[24] Herbert Riseley gave the Aryas the credit of "a definite creed resting upon scriptures of great antiquity and high reputation" and characterised their teachings as "bold and masculine" and "free from the bump of eclecticism which has proved fatal to the Brahmo Samaj."[25] Voicing a similar opinion, Blunt, in his Census Report for the United Provinces in 1911 recorded that an element of strength in the Arya Samaj was "its freedom from the formlessness and indefiniteness of Hindu polytheism on one side and the weak eclecticism of such reformed sects as the Brahmo Samaj on the other... The Arya Samaj alone has provided a manly and straightforward creed."[26]

The committee represented the cream of the educated Punjabis. Almost eighty per cent of the members of the Lahore Arya Samaj were Khatris, and mostly in government service. Among them were a district judge, three doctors, a lawyer, a

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teacher, three government translators and five clerks employed in different government offices. Five were M.A.'s and two B.A.'s, when not more than a dozen Punjabis held the M.A. degree in the whole of Punjab in 1877.

Lala Lajpat Rai summarised the conditions prevailing at the time of Swamiji's arrival and the founding of Arya Samaj at Lahore, as follows:

> While scepticism was catching hold of many a noble soul, while this sudden rush of European ideas overturned the balance of many a deeply religious mind, while the Hindus were becoming disgusted with their religion and their forefathers, and while they were preparing to throw their religion and their nationality to the dogs, up rose a Saviour. Yes, while the Hindus, having been well nigh crushed by their opponents, were thinking of turning atheists or begging salvation at the hands of Christians and Mohammadans, up rose the fire in the furnace called Arya Samaj.[27]

It was a great organisation, a mighty movement, and like 'a heavenly fire', according to Andrew Jackson Davis, an American intellectual of high standing. Said he:

> I behold a fire that is universal, the fire of infinite love, which burneth to destroy all hate, which dissolve the all things to their purification... To restore primitive Aryan religion to its first pure state was the fire in the furnace called 'Arya Samaj', which started and burned brightly in the bosom of that inspired son of God in India, Dayanand Saraswati. From him the fire of inspiration was transferred to many noble inflaming souls in the land of Eastern dreams... Hindoos and Moslems ran together to extinguish the consuming fire, which was flaming on all sides with a fierceness that was never dreamt of by the first kindler Dayanand. And Christians, too, whose altar, fires, and sacred candles were originally lighted in the dreamy East, joined Moslems and Hindoos in their efforts to extinguish the *New light of Asia*. But the heavenly fire increased and propagated itself.[28]

Swamiji's visit to Punjab and the establishment of Arya Samaj at Lahore was of great significance. This land gave several pioneers to this great movement like Lala Sain Das, Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi, Pandit Lekhram, Lala Lajpat Rai, Lala Hansraj, Mahatma Munshiram (Swami Shraddhanand), Lala Jivan Das, Master Durga Prasad, Bhai Parmanand, Swami Darshananand, Mahashay Rajpal, to name a few.

## THE INITIAL YEARS

After the establishment of Arya Samaj at Lahore, the movement gained a definite momentum and branches of the Samaj were established not only in Punjab but also in various parts of India and abroad. However, due to certain serious differences on ideological and educational matters, a split became inevitable. Yet "the division of the Samaj into two bitterly opposed camps did more to invigorate the movement than to

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exhaust it... it unleashed a new flood of energy and organisational innovation."[29] Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Punjab was registered in December, 1895 under the Act XXI of 1860 making it a legally recognised body.[30] Full time *updeshaks* (preachers) were recruited. A central tract and Publishing Department of the Sabha was established. *Veda-prachār* was undertaken with full vigour.[31] A Pratinidhi Sabha was also constituted in the United Provinces and Oudh (now U.P.). The Arya Samajs established in the state during the lifetime of Swamiji himself, included those at Dehradun, April 1879; Muradabad, July 1879; Kashi, April 1880; Lucknow, May 1880; Farrukhabad, May 1880; Agra, December 1880 and Saharanpur.[32] The dynamic movement received a few jolts as well. Pandit Lekhram was martyred in 1897. Pandit Bhimsen of Etawah left the Samaj and turned to orthodoxy. Gopi Nath filed a defamation case against Mahatma Munshiram and his associates in 1901.[33]

By 1906, about 300 branches of the Arya Samaj were established in Punjab, 280 in the United Provinces, 38 in Rajputana, 36 in Central India, 30 in Bengal and Bihar, 14 in Bombay, 6 in Madras Presidency (now Tamil Nadu) and 1 in Assam. There were 6 branches in upper and lower Burma, and one each at Mombasa, Nairobi and Port Florence in British Africa.[34] In 1891 the followers of the Samaj numbered nearly 40,000 in the whole of India. The number increased almost three-fold in the North-West Provinces of Agra and Oudh and by fifty per cent in Punjab during the decade preceding the census of 1901.[35]

Punjab, the land of five rivers, became an immensely fertile ground for the Arya Samaj, owing to the distinct social structure of the population and the special needs and aspirations of the Punjabi Hindus at that time. Muslims, Hindus and the Sikhs were 50.12, 36.65 and 12.8 per cent of the total population respectively. The Muslims were in a dominant position and the Sikhs were more powerful than their numerical strength. The Hindu minority was craving for its identity. The Christian missionaries were active ever since their arrival in Punjab in 1834. They were engaged in opening schools, orphanages and *zanānā* missions, and were busy in polemic publications[36] and conversions. At the time of the annexation of Punjab in 1849, a large number of jobs were created. These were grabbed mostly by the Indian Christians, particularly the Bengalis. The fear of a 'Christian threat' gripped the mind of the Hindu minority. They sought a saviour and a platform, which they found in Dayanand and the Arya Samaj. Unlike the Bengali dominated Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj was without any influence of the west and Christianity. The Indian-ness of the Arya Samaj gave the Punjabis the required self-respect and pride.

The religious leadership of the caste Brahmans did not match in status, the fairly superior educational, professional and financial position secured by the Khatris in Punjab. That their social status was to be determined on the basis of worth and not birth, found a ready acceptance with the Khatris. Swami Dayanand declared them to be fully qualified to study the scriptures, perform *havan* and other *sanskārs* etc., without any need for and subordination to the Brahmans. They were given full autonomy in organisational matters and a clear vision of the reforms to be implemented. It gave them the much needed sense of pride to stand against the other religions and to face the social challenges.

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The Arya Samaj has a lot to its credit. The identification of our roots in the Vedas, the respect for our ancient culture and way of life, the teaching of Sanskrit and Hindi in Devanagari script, the study of Aṣṭādhyāyī and Mahābhāshya, in particular, and the spread of education, are to a great extent, the outcome of the work done by the Samaj. Rishi Dayanand was the first person to translate the Vedas into an Indian language, thus bringing them within the reach of the common man. He allowed the study of the Vedas to women and Shudras on the authority of the Veda itself.[37]

Its work in the field of education is well known and widely recognised. The establishment of D.A.V. College at Lahore in 1886,[38] Kanya Mahavidyalaya at Jalandhar in 1891 and Gurukula Kangri in Haridwar in 1902, proved historical. Over time, a chain of such institutions not only helped in dispelling ignorance from the society but also successfully resisted the wave of conversions by the Christians in the garb of spreading education.

The Arya Samaj rendered commendable service to the cause of women emancipation. A number of Mahila Arya Samajs and schools were established. A fortnightly journal, *The Bhārat Bhaginī* (edited by Mrs. Hardevi Roshan Lal) and the monthlies – *Pānchāl Panditā* (Jalandhar), *Banitā Hiteshī* (Aligarh) and *Arya Vanitā* (Jabalpur) were started to create awareness among women. A Bāl Bidhwā Biwāh Sabhā was established with headquarters at Shahjahanpur and branches at Delhi and Jhansi. *Ablā Hitkārak* (Bijnor) and *Arya Darpan* (Shahjahanpur) were edited and published by Pandit Shankar Lal and Munshi Bakhtawar Singh respectively, to promote widow-remarriage. The traditional Hindus favoured child-marriage. They firmly believed that the mother, father and elder brother of a girl go to hell if she is not married before the age of ten.[39] Contrary to this, Swami Dayanand advocated 16 years as the minimum age of marriage for a girl, way back in 1875.[40] Dayanand was in fact far ahead of his times, when he advised in Satyarth Prakash in 1875 that boys and girls should not be married without their consent.[41] It may be noted that even half a century later, the executive committee of Sri Bharat Mahamandal opposed the government's move to raise the minimum age of marriage for girls from 12 to 14 years and termed it a great blow to Hindu religion in its letter to the government in April 1924.[42]

Satī, the horrible custom of burning a widow alive at the pyre of her dead husband, was opposed tooth and nail by the Arya Samaj. The orthodox Pandits gave religious sanction to the custom by misquoting the Veda mantras and through their forced interpretations.[43] Dayanand Saraswati proved that the quotations given by such people in support of the satī-system were spurious and that the Vedas did not allow such inhuman practices. Arya Samaj helped change the mentality of the people, leading to the abolition of the custom.[44]

Before the advent of Dayanand, the treatment meted out to the Dalits (a term promoted by the Arya Samaj for Shudras) by the caste-Hindus was quite inhuman. They were not permitted to draw water from a public well, to enter a temple or to ride a horse even on festive occasions. In certain parts of the country, the Dalits were prohibited from using the public roads and streets. The Hindus were practicing untouchability even at the inevitable cost of their own socio-religious existence. There was none to plead for the Dalits on the basis of the scriptures. The Arya Samaj took up

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their cause, waged a historic struggle and made immense sacrifice to change the Hindu mindset and to uplift the down-trodden. The Samaj advocated *Varṇa-vyavasthā* in place of the caste division by birth.

Swami Dayanand was full of compassion even for animals. He paid attention to the miserable plight of cows, published *Gokaruṇānidhi* and collected signatures for a total ban on cow-slaughter. It was he, who established the first ever Gaushala in the country at Rewari. Following in his footsteps, the movements for cow-protection and vegetarianism were initiated and vigorously nourished by the Samaj.

The conversion of Hindus to other faiths was taking place on a large scale. The Arya Samaj believed that the Vedic religion was not the monopoly of those born within the pale of Hinduism, and was instead for the entire humanity. So the Samaj started a forceful campaign for the reconversion of the Hindus who had converted to other faiths, and achieved considerable success.[45] Significant achievements of this movement include the reconversion in the Malabar area in 1922 and that of thousands of Malkana Rajputs in Bharatpur state and the districts of Mathura and Agra under the leadership of Swami Shraddhanand and Mahatma Hansraj.

Arya Samaj remained in the forefront of helping the victims of natural calamities. Be it the severe famines in Mewar and Haryana in 1899 and in Eastern Bengal in 1920, a major earth-quake in Kangra and Dharamshala areas in 1905 or the heavy floods in Garhwal in 1919, the Arya Samaj organised relief operations and opened schools and orphanages as rehabilitation measures. The orphanage at Ferozepur was established in 1878 during the life-time of Swamiji. The orphanages at Bareilly, Ajmer, Muzaffarnagar and Lahore were established in 1884, 1895, 1907 and 1916 respectively. Thousands of orphans were given shelter, health care and education. These institutions were maintained and run through public contribution. The Arya Samaj became the first non-Christian body to establish orphanages in India. The achievements of the Samaj are indeed far too many to be enumerated.

The Samaj maintained its character as a dynamic movement through thick and thin and did not turn into a sect or become a monument to its leader. Idol worship, directly or indirectly, had swallowed its many sharp critics like Kabir in the past. However, it is creditable for the Samaj that there is no temple of Dayanand anywhere. Let me end with an observation by J.T.F. Jordens who has gone deep into the history of Arya Samaj and the philosophy of Dayanand Saraswati. He says:

> The absence in the Arya Samaj of certain important factors, a guru-disciple *paramparā*, special symbols (*tilak, mantra,* ritual, book), and a strong cultural-religious base, made the development of the organisation into a sect after the death of Dayanand virtually impossible. Moreover, the historical development of the Samaj since the departure of its founder has generally prevented or impeded any significant strengthening of those factors, and the significant diffusion of the Samaj in migrant Indian communities around the globe also works against them. ... In this respect the Samaj certainly has lived up to the hopes of its founder.[46]

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## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. The Indian inhabitants who are the descendants of an advanced Aryan race are commonly known as the Hindus these days. This term has been used accordingly.
2. J.N. Farquhar, 1977, *Modern Religious Movements in India,* Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, New Delhi, p. 395. Dayanand Saraswati expressed his deep sense of concern on the high rate of female infanticide in his twelfth lecture in Pune on July 31, 1875. See Dayanand Saraswati, 1981, *Updesh Manjarī*, Arsh Sahitya Prachar Trust, Delhi, pp. 105-107.
3. Census of India, 1891, General Report, p. 217.
4. Census Report of India, 1901.
5. F. Max Müller, *Biographical Essays,* cf. Clayton, *The Rigveda and Vedic Religion*, p. 21.
6. B.N. Motiwala, 1935, *Karsondas Mulji; A Biographical Study*, Mumbai.
7. J.T.F. Jordens, 1998, *Dayananda Sarasvati: Essays on His Life and Ideas,* Manohar Publishers, New Delhi, pp. 142-143. Even today the situation in certain ashrams/deras is no better. Such indecent practices have recently been reported in the press.
8. *History of the Sect of the Maharajas, or Ballabhacharyas in Western India,* published anonymously by Karsondas Mulji, 1865, London; *cf.* J.T.F. Jordens, *op. cit.*, pp.140-159.
9. J.N. Farquhar, *op.cit.*, p. 109.
10. Martin Luther was called to Worms under a Papal Warrant to explain his position but Dayanand himself went to Kashi to challenge Orthodoxy.
11. *Kashi Shāstrārtha,* Samvedi Prakashan (1880); *Kashi Shāstrārtha,* Vedic Yantralaya, Prayag, 1882; Tulsiram, Prof., 2000, *Swami Dayanand Saraswati's Kashi Debate on Idol Worship,* Propkarini Sabha, Ajmer.
12. The Hindu Patriot, January 17, 1870, Quoted here from K.C. Yadav, 1987, *The Autobiography of Dayanand Saraswati,* Manohar Publications, p. 8; In Kanpur shāstrārtha, W. Thaina, the referee, gave a judgment in writing in favour of Swami Dayanand. His success in the *shāstrārtha* was also evident from the fact that an opposing Pandit Halder Ojha was compelled to issue a notice in Sanskrit, Hindi and Urdu asking people not to throw the images of deities in river Ganga.
13. Dayanand Saraswati, 1972, *Satyarth Prakash,* Eng. Tr. Durga Prasad, Jan Gyan Parkashan, Delhi.
14. This Arya Samaj is now known as Kakarvadi Arya Samaj.
15. His father Mulji Thakarshi was also enrolled as a member of the executive committee of this Samaj. Their building, Damodar Mulji Thakarshi Hall - Paral - Mumbai (popularly known as Domadar Hall) remained the address of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar for seven years. It was the time when the non-Arya Samajists did not provide accommodation on rent to him in Baroda (Kushal Dev, *Arya Samaj aur Dr. Ambedkar,* Hindon, p. 20 and note 5 on p. 71).
16. Ramdas, Ganesh Shrikrishna Khaparde and Shyamji Krishnavarma were students. Chhabildas Lallubhai later married his daughter to Shyamji Krishnavarma who is a known revolutionary and Sanskrit Scholar.
17. Dayanand Saraswati clearly states in *Swamantavyāmantavyaprakāsh,* "It is not my object to institute a new system of religion in any manner what so ever. I have to follow truth; nay, I have made it my duty to persuade others to act on truth and abjure falsehood for the sake of their own good." Quoted here from Dayanand's, *Satyarth Prakash.*
18. Damodar Sundardas, 1933, *Mumbai Aryamajano Itihāsa* (Gujarati), Aryaprakash Mudranalaya, Anand, pp. 8-9.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 32.
20. Swami Dayanand Saraswati, 1883, *Svikarpatra and Rules & Regulations of the Paropkarini Sabha,* Vedic Yantralaya, Ajmer, p. 4.

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21. Durga Parsad, 1889, *A Triumph of Truth* being an English Translation of *Satya Dharm Vichār*, Virjanand Press, Lahore.
22. This opposition by the conservative Hindus continued even afterwards. They termed Swami Dayanand an atheist and a paid spy of the Christians.
23. *Arya Samajon ke Niyam aur Upniyam*, 1878, Executive Committee, Arya Samaj, Lahore.
24. Lajpat Rai, Lala, 1989, *The Arya Samaj*, Renaissance Publishing House, Delhi, p. 116.
25. Herbert Riseley, 1915, *The People of India*, W. Thacker & Co., London, p. 254. cf. Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya, 1981, *The Origin, Scope and Mission of the Arya Samaj*, Ratna Kumari Svadhyaya Sansthan, Allahabad, p. 19.
26. Census Report 1911, for U.P., pp. 133, 143.
27. Lajpat Rai, Lala, 2012, *Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi: Life and Work* (ed. Ram Prakash, Dr.), Satyarth Prakashan, Kurukshetra, p. 7.
28. A.J. Davis, 1885, *Beyond The Valley*, Colby and Rich Publisher, New York, p. 382.
29. K.W. Jones, 1976, *Arya Dharm: Hindu Consciousness in 19th-Century Punjab*, Manohar Publications, New Delhi, p.191.
30. Chamupati, 1935, *Arya Pratinidhi Sabha (Punjab) kā Sachitra Itihāsa*, Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Lahore.
31. Radha Kishan Mehta, 1903, *Tārīkh Arya Samaj: The work of Arya Samaj during Past quarter century*, (Urdu), Ram Dittamal, Lahore.
32. Shivdayalu, 1963, *Arya Pratinidhi Sabha Uttar Pardesh kā 75 Varṣīya Itihāsa* (Hindi), Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Lucknow, p. 34.
33. The trial ended in Pandit Gopi Nath's bitter humiliation. The magistrate labeled him an "imposter... who has persistently played on the Hindu public for the sake of his own aggrandizement." See Mahatma Munshiram, *Gopinath dwārā Saddharm Prachārak par Case.*
34. Vishnu Lal Sharma, 1906, *A Hand book of the Arya Samaj*, The Arya Tract Society of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, pp. 45-46.
35. Census Report of India (1901), vol. XVI, p. 90.
36. Ludhiana Press was established in 1835 and within first three years, it released 68000 volumes. C.K.W. Jones, *Arya Dharm*, p. 8.
37. *Yajurveda*, 26.2
38. Ram Prakash, Dr., 2012, *Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi* (Hindi), Satyarth Prakashan, Kurukshetra, pp. 35-45.
39. *Parāshari*, 7.6,8; *Shīghraboth*, 1.54-65
40. Dayanand Saraswati, 1875, *Satyarth Prakash*, first edition, Star Press, Rampur, Banaras.
41. Ram Prakash, Dr., *op. cit.*, pp. 35-45.
42. *Nigamāgamachandrikā* (Hindi monthly, edited by Brahmachārī Prabhudutt Sharma), 1924, Banaras, pp. 279-280.
43. For example, *Ṛgveda* 10.18.7.
44. Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-103.
45. It may be mentioned that the elder son of Mahatma Gandhi, Hiralal Gandhi, once accepted Islam and became Abdulah Gandhi for some time. On his reconversion by the Arya Samaj, Kasturba Gandhi expressed her gratitude to the Samaj.
46. J.T.F. Jordens, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

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# CHAPTER 7

# Arya Samaj Abroad: Past and Present

*Ram Prakash and Vinay Arya*

## ARYA SAMAJ IN INDIA

While establishing Arya Samaj in Mumbai in April 1875, twenty-eight principles were laid down. The third principle reads as under:

"There shall be a principal Arya Samaj in each province, and the other Arya Samajs shall be its branches, all connected with one another."

After some time, when branches of the Samaj sprang up in several states, the concept of the 'principal Samaj' was replaced by a democratically constituted organisation called Arya Pratinidhi Sabha. All the Samaj branches in the states became its affiliates. In addition, Punjab and Sindh Arya Pradeshik Pratinidhi Sabha, Lahore was also established. It is now known as Arya Pradeshik Pratinidhi Sabha, New Delhi and has several Arya Samajs affiliated to it, particularly in Punjab, Haryana and the Delhi region. In India, there are now Arya Pratinidhi Sabhas in every state except Goa, Andaman-Nicobar Islands, and Lakshadweep. Puducherry and Kerala do have Arya Samajs but not a Pratinidhi Sabha. The North-Eastern states, except Manipur and Mizoram, have their branches affiliated to Assam Arya Pratinidhi Sabha. While the state of Telangana has been recently carved out of Andhra Pradesh, the Pratinidhi Sabha for the two states remains the same.

Arya Samaj now runs about 3,000 educational institutions, including schools, degree and post-graduate colleges, polytechnics, Ayurvedic colleges, dental and engineering colleges, a large number of dispensaries (including naturopathy clinics) and several orphanages, etc. Gurukula Kangri Vishwavidyalaya, Haridwar and D.A.V.

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University at Jalandhar are the universities run by Arya Samaj and approved by the University Grants Commission. The state governments of Haryana and Rajasthan have also established universities at Rohtak and Ajmer respectively, in the memory of Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati. Almost every Arya Pratinidhi Sabha publishes its weekly/monthly magazine. The Arya Pratinidhi Sabhas in India and abroad are mostly affiliated to Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, New Delhi, an international body constituted in 1908.

## ARYA SAMAJ ABROAD

Outside India, Arya Samaj has its branches and temples in Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Fiji, Great Britain, Guyana, Kenya, Malaysia, Mauritius, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Pakistan, Trinidad, Thailand, Suriname, Singapore, South Africa and the United States of America. The movement is very strong and effective in certain countries, including Mauritius, Suriname, Guyana and Fiji. The Samaj has contributed significantly to the struggle for independence of these countries and has enriched their social, economic and cultural life.

Two factors have contributed to the spread of Arya Samaj movement outside India:

(1) Certain educated Arya Samajists who went abroad for business, employment or education in the 20th century established units of Arya Samaj wherever they went, and

(2) In first half of the 19th century, indentured labourers were taken from India in large numbers, to other colonies established by the European empires like Great Britain, France, Netherlands, in countries such as British and Dutch Guyana, Mauritius, South Africa, Kenya, Fiji Islands, Trinidad, Suriname among others. Those poor people knew nothing about the conditions laid down in their contracts, and were forced to work and live in cruel circumstances. They undoubtedly loved their religion and culture, but their masters being Christians, many of them were converted to Christianity. Certain Arya Samajist preachers and sannyāsīs, who went to those countries, were moved by their plight and worked for their emancipation. They saved them from being converted and established Samajs in those countries.

## ARYA SAMAJ IN AFRICA

### *Arya Samaj in Mauritius*

Mauritius, an island nation in the Indian Ocean, is popularly known as Laghu-Bharat or mini-India, as a vast majority of its population is of Indian origin. In Mauritius, the first indenture contracts were drawn up in 1834. A large number of the poor went from India as indentured labourers and made the island-nation their home. Today, most of them are Arya Samajists, and the Samaj is a formidable organisation with a huge following.[1] The leading lights of the Mauritius Arya Samaj were Pandit Vishwanath Atmaram, Pandit Cashinath Kistoe, Moti Master, Pandit K. Gayasingh, Pandit Anirood Sharma, Dr. Jhugroo Seegobin, Pandit Benymadho Suteeram, Ramparsad Neewoor, Basdeo Bissoondoyal, Mohunlall Mohith, Khemlal Lallah, Pt. Sahadeo, S. Bhuckory, B.

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Ramlallah and many others who distinguished themselves in the service of Arya Samaj. Manilal Maganlal Doctor, Dr. Chiranjiva Bhardwaja, Swami Swatantranand, Mehta Jaimini and Swami Dhruvanand Saraswati from India visited Mauritius from time to time and helped consolidate the movement.[2] The first Arya Samaj in Mauritius was established in 1903 at Curepipe Road. The services of M. Ramdonee, Dr. O.N. Gangoo, Rajnarain Guttee, Dr. Roodrasen Neewoor, Rajendra Mohith, Harridev Ramdhony, Devpal Cowereea and Satyadeo Peerthum need special mention.[3]

***Arya Samaj, Nairobi (Kenya)***

About forty-five religious-minded persons of Indian origin assembled on July 5, 1903 at the residence of Jai Gopal, on River Road and held consultations for establishing an Arya Samaj. Inder Singh Kent, Badrinath and others explained the importance of Arya Samaj and exhorted their countrymen to give up the use of liquor and shun social evils. Convinced by their discourses, thirty-nine persons became members of the Arya Samaj. Inder Singh and Badrinath were elected as President and Secretary of the Samaj respectively and the members included Mathura Das, Baisakhi Ram Bhardwaj, Bihari Lal, Wazir Chand, Amar Nath, Jai Gopal, Lakshman Das, Mool Chand and Ram Ratan.[4] Initially, the weekly *satsang* and meetings were held at the residence of the members, as they had no common place to meet at that time.

On July 10, 1903 the Nairobi Arya Samaj took a decision to affiliate itself to the Punjab Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Lahore. The first annual session of the Samaj was held on August 6 and 7, the following year. The session began with recitation of devotional songs (bhajans), religious sermons and prayers in front of the shop of Wazir Chand contractor, on the River Road. President Inder Singh Kent delivered an inspiring lecture on 'Arya Samaj and its Principles'. Next day, the annual report was presented after the morning *havan,* and Shalig Ram Sharma delivered an enlightening lecture on '*Varṇāshram Sanskārs*' and women's education. After this, the annual function became a popular public event for the Hindus.

After a sharp increase in the membership of the Samaj, a piece of land measuring 56'X54' was purchased on Queensway Street (now Mama Ngina Street), next to Barclays Bank, Queensway House for establishing a *Satsang Hall.* The foundation was laid on September 11, 1904 and a temporary structure was built within two months. The opening ceremony took place on November 6, 1904, and meetings were held there regularly. Keeping in view, the need for a permanent *satsang hall,* the foundation stone of a new building was laid by Sampat Rao Gaikewad, brother of the Maharaja of Baroda, on November 6, 1912. Ready by 1916, it was one the most magnificent buildings in Nairobi at that time.

Nanji Bhai Kalidas Mehta, a great philanthropist donated millions of rupees and land in East African countries for the establishment of Arya Samajs and Vedic schools. He donated his 6 acre land in Parklands and 16000 shillings for Brahmacharya Ashram. In 1936, he donated 17000 shillings for Kanya

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Pāthashālā (Girls' School). In 1949, he laid the foundation stone of a three-storey building of a pāthashālā at Ngara. His contribution in establishing Arya Samajs and its other institutions is incomparable.

Shraddhanand Brahmacharya Ashram, was the first building at Parklands. Mohinder Pal Hall was constructed in 1965, and later, a huge building named Maharshi Dayanand Bhavan, was also built, with a magnificent *Yajñashālā* (Prayer room).

An Arya Kanya Pāthashālā was established in 1910. The orthodox vehemently opposed it but in vain. Soon more schools were opened. Today, Arya Samaj Nairobi runs an Arya Primary School, Arya Kindergarten, Arya Girls' Secondary School, Arya Boys' Secondary School, and Parklands Arya Girls' High School.

After some time a 'Vedic House' was constructed on Mama Ngina Street with Kaunda Street at the rear end, a commercial area of Nairobi. This seven-storey building serves as the life-line of Arya Samaj Nairobi. It provides sustenance to the Arya Samaj temples, schools and a dispensary and is the centre of various charitable activities.

Many eminent Arya Samajist scholars and preachers such as Bhai Parmanand (1905), Pandit Purnanand (1908), Maharani Shankar Sharma (1909), Manglanand Puri, Swami Swatantranand (1921), Acharya Ramdev (1924), Pandit Chamupati (1925), Pandit Buddhdev Vidyalankar (1926), Pandit Buddhdev Mirpuri (1929), Mehta Jaimini (1931), Satyadev Vidyalankar and Mehta Ramchander Shastri (1934)[5] visited Nairobi and worked for strengthening the Arya Samaj movement.

There are several branch-organisations of Arya Samaj. Of these, Arya Strī Samaj is very popular. It runs two schools. Arya Veerangana Dal, an affiliate of Strī Arya Samaj, formed in 1947, does voluntary service and propagates Arya values. The Aryan Youth Wing was formed in 1980 and Arya Bal Sabha in 1983, which work among the youth and children respectively. The organisation took a keen interest in propagating religious education and promoted Hindi. Shrimati and Shri M.L. Bhalla played important roles, and in the early days, Shrimati Sushila Sachadeva, Shrimati Subodh Sharma, Shrimati Raj Taneja and Shrimati Urmila Bedi volunteered their services.[6]

Arya Samaj Nairobi held its centenary celebrations in 2004. People from various countries, including Mauritius, South Africa and India participated in the historic conference. After the conference, Francis Mwangi Mwanka, a Kenyan by birth, was sent to Mauritius to acquire further knowledge of Vedic dharma.

***Arya Samaj, Mombasa (Kenya)***

Some Indians met at the house of Kashiram Bauri in Mombasa on March 10, 1905 and decided to constitute an Arya Samaj there. Vanshilal, Gokuldass Sanwlay, B.D. Nayar, Lachman Das, Dr. Murari Lal, Harikrishan Dayal and Purushotam Velji played an important role in its establishment. Readings from Satyarth Prakash became a normal practice in the homes of Arya Samajists. On the auspicious day of Shivaratri, 1908, the

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Samaj was organised formally, and Kashiram and Vanshilal were elected President and Secretary of the Samaj respectively. A *kachchā* house was purchased for the Sunday *havan* and *satsang, and* later, a beautiful building was constructed. Arya Putri Pāthashālā was opened in 1913.

The increasing demand for labour due to the war in 1914 resulted in the arrival of Indians in large numbers. The majority of them were Hindus. To baptise them in Arya Samaj, an Āchār-Sudhār Sabha was constituted with its office in the Arya Samaj temple. Sensing its impact on the Indians, the Christian Missionaries got worried. The British Government in India too, was quite wary of the activities of Arya Samaj. This made the military government in Mombasa suspicious of Arya Samaj's activities. As a result, on August 17, 1915, while the Arya Samajists were holding the weekly *satsang* in their temple the military gharoed them and locked the temple. Several members, including Vanshilal (President), Bishan Das Ralla Ram (Secretary) and Lal Chand Sharma were arrested.[7] They were tried in the military court. Death penalty was pronounced on B.R. Sharma and Lal Chand Sharma. Several others were either awarded life imprisonment or exiled from the country. However, after some time, the death penalty of B.R. Sharma and Lal Chand Sharma was converted into life imprisonment and 10 years imprisonment respectively. The Mombasa Arya Samaj provided help to those who had been punished, and pressurised the government to give them justice. As a result, the government appointed a commission which found the allegations baseless. All the Arya Samajists were set free and the temple was reopened in 1918 towards the end of the World War.[8]

After this catastrophe, it required courage to be a member of Arya Samaj and visit the temple. However, a small band of sincere believers rallied round the banner of Swami Dayanand again. Fresh elections were held in which Narsi Bhai Patel and H.B. Sharma were elected President and Secretary respectively. The work of Arya Samaj was restarted vigorously, and its membership grew significantly. Pandit Purnanand, along with Mathura Prasad Bhajanopadeshak and Pandit Maharani Shankar Sharma, visited Mombasa and made a good impression on the public. The visits of Pandit Ishwardutt Vidyalankar, Thakur Praveen Singh and Swami Swatantranand also contributed enormously towards strengthening the Samaj. After that a large number of scholars from India visited Mombasa for *dharma-prachār.*

***Arya Samaj in Uganda***

Pandit Purnanand and Pandit Maharani Shankar Sharma reached Uganda in 1908 and 1913 respectively. They created interest in the public for establishing an Arya Samaj at Kampala, the capital of Uganda. However, it could not be properly organised due to the World War. After the war, Dr. Ishwar Das and Nahar Singh succeeded in establishing an Arya Samaj in 1918 with the cooperation of Badri Nath, Mathura Das and Pandit Baisakhi Ram Bhardwaj (all the three from Nairobi). Pandit Ishwardutt Vidyalankar and Swami Swatantranand did *dharma-prachār* during 1920-21, which further strengthened the Samaj movement.[9] An Arya Samaj School was also established in Kampala. In 1929, a big building was constructed for cultural activities.

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The Uganda Arya Samaj remained one of the most active Samajs in East Africa until the dictator Idi Amin[10] forced all the people of Indian origin to leave Uganda. After this exodus, the work of Arya Samaj came to an end.[11]

The revival of Arya Samaj in Uganda is considered vital to the growth of the Arya Samaj in East Africa. So a delegation led by the office bearers of Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of East Africa (APSEA) – Anil Kapila, Arun Taneja and Kamal Joshi – visited Kampala, Jinja and Lugazi on May 30 and June 1, 2014 to initiate the revival with the cooperation of Mohindra Bhai Mehta, Capt. Abhay Aggarwal, P.K. Sharma and Abhilash Jain from Jinja. *Havan* was performed at Lugazi and at Arya School, Kololo Hills. It was resolved to continue with *havan* at least once a month.[12]

***Arya Samaj in Tanzania***

Arya Samaj was established in Darussalam (Tanzania) in 1912. After the First World War, the Indian population increased in Tanzania and so did the membership of Arya Samaj. In due course of time, Arya Samaj Darussalam instituted 'Hanuman Physical Culture Institute', 'Aryan Social Service League' and 'Dev Kunwar Arya Kanya Shala' for the education of girls of all religions. An Arya Vidya Sabha was established which managed the Kanya Shala.

The Arya Samaj at Tanga was formally established on February 2, 1947. Weekly prayer meetings were held and a building was constructed. The Arya Samaj also provided Hindi education for which a number of people rendered free service. It gave scholarships to deserving students. A library with books in English, Hindi and Gujarati was also maintained. The Samaj worked in close cooperation with other Hindu organisations in the region.

After sometime, Arya Samajs were also established at Tabora, Mwanza and Arusha. Arya Pratinidhi Sabha Tanzania was constituted on July 19, 1974.

***Arya Samaj, Zanzibar***

Zanzibar, a semi-autonomous part of Tanzania, is a small Island off its coast, just south of the equator in East Africa. A Punjabi, Nathu Ram serving in custom department was an Arya Samajist. He gifted a copy of Satyarth Prakash to a devout Vaishnavite, Raghu Bhai, who turned red with anger on seeing it. However, he did not refuse the gift, and the book kept lying at his house gathering dust. One day he thought of reading it, and this proved to be a turning point in his life. He became an Arya Samajist and started organising *satsang* at his residence. The Arya Samaj was formally established in 1908.

Gokul Hansraj Bhatia got a *Nilamghar* on lease for fifty years which was utilised for holding Arya Samaj *satsang* and performing *havan*. Pandit Maharani Shankar Sharma visited Zanzibar in 1913 and Mehta Jaimini in 1933. As a result, the Samaj grew in its popularity. It took over the responsibility for the religious, cultural and educational activities among the Hindus in the Island which continued for over fifty years. The Samaj built a girls' school and a library in 1917. Regular prayer meetings were held and Hindu festivals celebrated. The contribution of Bhanji Dahya Bhai, Lakshman Bhai, Karnpal Gadvi, Karsan Dwarkadas and Govind Bhai Nanji Patel was quite significant in popularising Arya Samaj in this area.

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After 1960, political developments led to many Indians leaving the Island, and now there are only a few Hindu families left. The temple was closed in 1964 and remained defunct until in 1982 the Hindus made an effort to make it functional again. Their efforts bore fruit in 1985.[13]

***Arya Pratinidhi Sabha East Africa (APSEA)***

By 1920, Arya Samajs had been established at Nairobi, Mombasa, Darussalam, Kisumu, Kampala and Zanzibar in East Africa. But there was no central organisation to co-ordinate their activities. A conference of the delegates of various Samajs was therefore convened in Nairobi on August 1, 1927 under the chairmanship of Ishwardutt Vidyalankar, who was in East Africa for *Dharma Prachār* at that time. In this conference, Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of East Africa (APSEA) was formally constituted with Lahori Ram and D.D. Puri as its President and Secretary respectively. The establishment of APSEA activated Samajs all over Eastern Africa. Several new Arya Samajs were also established. The number of Arya Samajs, which was only six in 1920, rose to seventeen in 1936 and twenty-seven in 1959.

***Arya Samaj in South Africa***

Some of the Indians settled in Natal (South Africa) were acquainted with the principles and activities of Arya Samaj in India. Among them was Mohkam Chand Varma, on whose request, Bhai Parmanand of D.A.V. College, Lahore was sent to Africa. He reached there on August 5, 1905 and started his work from Durban. He later shifted to Pietermaritzburg, the capital of Natal. He toured several provinces of Southern Africa. On the occasion of his visit to Johannesburg, a reception committee for his entourage was formed. The committee was chaired by M.K. Gandhi[14] who was practising there during those days. Bhai Parmanand established Hindu Sudhar Sabha (reform movement) and Hindu Youngmen Association to help Indians remain in touch with their roots.

The work was furthered by Swami Shankaranand. After reaching Durban on October 4, 1908, the Swami established Veda Dharma Sabhas in various cities. Their objectives and the principles were similar to those of Arya Samaj. That is why several Veda Sabhas got converted into Arya Samajs in due course of time. The Hindus in South Africa were slowly losing their identity, and did not even celebrate festivals like Diwali, which thanks to Swamiji, was celebrated for the first time in 1908. The Arya Samajs of Pietermaritzburg, Newcastle etc. are among the prominent Arya Samajs established by him. 'Satya Vedic Dharma Jigyasu Sabhas' and 'Nagari Pracharini Sabhas' were functional at several places, and were converted into Arya Samaj on the advice of Dr. Bhagat Ram.[15] To Shahi Singh, Makkhan Singh, Bikha Maharaj and a few other Indians settled in Pietermaritzburg, goes the credit of establishing Arya Samaj there in 1908. Swami Manglanand Puri, Ishwardutt Vidyalankar, Thakur Praveen Singh and Dr. Bhagat Ram Sehgal also made significant contributions to the spread of Arya Samaj in South Africa.

Aryan Youth Association, Durban was the most powerful organisation for the propagation of Vedic Dharma in Southern Africa in 1924-1925. On the suggestion of

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Satyadeva that Maharshi Dayanand Birth Centenary be celebrated at Natal, the Association arranged a public meeting in Durban on November 2, 1924, in which representatives of various Arya Samaj organisations accepted the proposal and Rishi Dayanand Centenary Celebration Committee of South Africa was constituted with Pandit Bhawani Dayal as its Chairman and Satyadev as Secretary. The birth centenary was celebrated on February 16-22, 1925 with great enthusiasm.[16] C.F. Andrews sent a congratulatory message through Banarsidas Chaturvedi appreciating the work being done by the Arya Samaj. He said,

> the Arya Samaj is the only institution which cares for the mother India, their national language Hindi and the ancient Aryan Culture. In Kenya, Zanzibar, Uganda, Tanganyika, Rhodesia, South Africa, Fiji, Mauritius, Singapore, Malaya etc. the Aryan culture has been preserved... The Arya Samaj has life, strength and above all, enthusiasm... Among the associations of Indians who serve the Indian immigrants abroad, the Arya Samaj is the most active, strong and most zealous.[17]

The Arya Samaj movement gained momentum due to the efforts of Swami Shankaranand, Bhawani Dayal and others. Several Arya Samajs were established and *Shuddhī sanskārs* were performed to bring back into the fold of Arya Samaj, the Indians who had been converted to Islam and Christianity.

Though there were many Samajs in South Africa, there was no central organisation. The *Sammelan* on February 22, 1925 resolved to constitute Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of South Africa, Natal with its central office at Durban. Pandit Bhawani Dayal and Meghraj were chosen President and Secretary respectively. On Meghraj's resignation, Satyadeva was appointed Secretary who served in that capacity for several years with great dedication. About 50 organisations got affiliated to this sabha by 2004. These included Arya Samajs, Arya Yuvak Sabhas, Strī Arya Samajs and a few Hindu organisations.[18] The Pratinidhi Sabha was affiliated to Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, New Delhi on October 23, 1927.[19]

Nardev Vedalankar organised Hindi Shiksha Sangh with fifty-one educational institutions affiliated to it, of which twenty-four were run by Arya Samaj. He also started Vedic Purohit Mandal. Arya Samaj Durban is running an Ārya Benevolent Home (Arya Anāthālaya) ever since its establishment on May 1, 1921.

Many activists contributed towards strengthening of the Arya Samaj movement in South Africa such as Swami Bhawani Dayal, Pandit Ishwardutt Vidyalankar, Pandit V.C. Nayanah Raj, Satyadeva, S.L. Singh, Shukhraj Chotai, Shishupal Rambharos, Mrs. Durga Bundhoo, R.S. Sewbrath, Rabby Jeawon, S. Gangadayal, Bhagwandin, Pandit R.M. Singh, Pandit S.A. Naidoo, Pandit Ramdutt, Shrimati Prabawati Nanackchand, B. Purmasir, B. Gangaram, K. Laloo, K. Doorgha, G. Baijnath, B. Rambilass and D. Badul to name a few.

At present, there are twenty-six registered units and fifteen temples of Arya Samaj in South Africa. A World Vedic Conference was organised from November 28 to

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December 1, 2013 at Durban City Hall, which was attended by several scholars from India and other countries.[20]

## ARYA SAMAJ IN ASIA

### *Arya Samaj in Bangladesh*

The Hindu population in Bangladesh is around two crore, which includes fourteen lakh Arya Samajists. At present, there are thirty-sixArya Samaj temples: four at Dinajpur, three each at Tagorgaon, Panchagar, Khulna, Satkira, two each at Rangpur, Nilphamari, Lalmonir Hut, Jessore, Bagar Hut, Gopalgong and one each at Bagura, Narail, Magura and Kustia. The Arya Samajists are trying to build nearly a hundred new temples in other districts, in the coming years.[21]

### *Arya Samaj in Myanmar*

Burma (now Myanmar) was a part of India till 1937. The preaching of Vedic Dharma in Rangoon, the capital of Burma, was initiated by a Bengali Sannyāsī Swami Brahmanand who achieved considerable success among the Bengalis living there. Arya Samaj Rangoon was established on July 7, 1899 with Kunjbihari Banerji as President and Basu as Secretary. Brahmaiyya, Devraj Sharma (a Gujarati Businessmen), Dr. Guru Dutt Saria, Halkar and Ram Prasad Singh were among those who did commendable work for spreading Arya Samaj in Burma. A grand temple of Arya Samaj Rangoon was constructed in 1933.[22] During the Second World War (1939-45), Burma came under the Japanese Rule and Arya Samaj Rangoon suffered considerably. However, Nijanand, Bhola Ram, Gautam Bhardwaj and L.B. Lathiya protected the property of Arya Samaj. Those who helped rebuild the Arya Samaj after the war included Bisandas, K.B. Sharma, Dr. Om Prakash, Ramraj Singh, Dr. S.L. Lamba, K.N. Rai, R.S.D. Joshi, L.B. Lathiya, Shyam Lal Bhartiya and Govind Bhai Patel.

Mandalay is an important city in Northern Burma. Many Indians joined government service in Mandalay for constructing railways and canals in 1890. They were mostly Punjabis, and many of them had an Arya Samajist background. They started activities of Arya Samaj at Mandalay by holding *satsangs* in the railway quarters. They rented a house in 1909 for the Samaj. Prominent among them were Ishwar Das, Mohan Singh contractor and Ramdev Mehta. Mohan Singh donated a building to Arya Samaj in 1914. Its rent was utilised for running an orphanage. Arya Samaj mandir was constructed in 1929 which had the provision for a library, a reading room and Arya Bal (Kumar) Sabha. Dr. Chiranjiva Bhardwaja also worked in Burma before shifting to Mauritius in 1911.

Machina, Maymyo, Myitkyina, Kanbalu, Minywa and Akyab are the prominent old Arya Samajs in Burma. Arya Samaj Machina was established in 1889, Maymyo in 1905, Myitkyina in 1912, Kanbalu in 1914, Minywa in 1917, Akyab in 1922, Namtu in 1934, Yenangyaung in 1934, Chauk in 1935, Prome in 1936, Insein in 1939, and Central Arya Samaj in 1935. Ramlal, Ganesh Das, Ramdev Mehra, Balkrishan Kapil, Inder Singh, Bhai Singh, Prithvi Singh, Roop Rai and Rameshwar Dayal were the prominent workers of Arya Samaj between 1912 and 1939. Though Arya Samaj Mogok was

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constituted by Kalu Ram Sharma in 1912, it started functioning properly in 1928 upon the arrival of Mehta Jaimini. The people were so impressed by his lectures that Narsingh Das Grover and Harvansh Gandhi donated a building to Arya Samaj in 1943. Arya Samaj Tat Hong was established in 1925 through the efforts of Hira Lal with the cooperation of Sher Singh, Muni Lal and Sita Ram.

Bombardment by the Japanese during the Second World War (1939-45) caused heavy damage to the Arya Samaj temples at Mandalay, Namtu and Central, etc. After the war was over, the temples were reconstructed. Pandit Madan Mohan Vidyasagar and Pandit Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya toured Burma in 1944 and 1952 respectively to reorganise the Arya Samaj. Anand Swami, Swami Dhruvanand and Swami Satya Prakash went to Myanmar in 1960, 1962 and 1980 respectively, and reactivated the Arya Samaj movement.

A Vedic conference was organised at Mandalay on April 14, 1952. The representatives of several Arya Samajs participated in it and re-established the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha. Ramsharan Das Joshi, Dr. Om Prakash and Ram Das Khetarpal were elected President, Secretary and Treasurer respectively.[23]

Today there are thirty-two active Arya Samajs affiliated to Arya Pratinidhi Sabha Myanmar with Ashok Khetrapal (Mandalay) and S.N. Dasgupta (Yangon) as acting President and Secretary respectively. The Arya Sabha of Myanmar has constructed an air-conditioned three-storey building at Mandalay. Its inauguration, on September 26, 2015, was attended by the representatives of about thirty Arya Samajs.

***Arya Samaj in Nepal***

Nepal has an overwhelming Hindu population. The country had been a centre of idol worship, blind faith and ignorance. Buffalos, goats, roosters and brant geese were butchered and offered to the deities, and meat was served to the community on the death of a family member. At such a time, Madhav Raj Joshi was born at Lalit Nagar in a respected family. He heard of a *sannyāsī* in India who denounced idol worship, incarnation, *shrāddha* of the dead and many other Paurāṇic beliefs and practices. The *Sādhu* was challenging the Paurāṇic pandits of Kashi for a *shāstrārtha* (disputation). He was none other than Swami Dayanand Saraswati. Joshi met Swamiji at Kashi in 1876, and became his disciple. Rishi Dayanand did not have a copy of Satyarth Prakash with him at that time. About twenty years later, Joshiji went to meet Chiniya Vaidya at Pokhra (Nepal) and found a copy of Satyarth Prakash lying among the waste-paper in a corner of the house. He took the book, read it and started preaching the tenets of Arya Samaj in Nepal. He established Arya Samaj at Pokhra in 1896, and at Lalitpur and Kathmandu in 1898. He opposed *inter alia* killing of animals for offering and eating.

The increasing influence of Arya Samaj worried the orthodox Brāhmaṇs. They started poisoning the ears of Chandra Shumsher Jang Bahadur Rana,[24] the Prime Minister of Nepal, alleging that Madhav Raj Joshi was preaching the teachings of Dayanand against their religion. The Rana ordered Joshiji to appear in the Darbar for a *shāstrārtha*. Master Gurudayal, a Punjabi friend of Joshiji accompanied him. *Shāstrārtha* was held on idol worship, *shrāddha* of the dead, the right of the Shudras to study the Vedas etc. It was only an excuse for liquidating Joshiji. Vishvanath Shastri and Ganga

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Dutt represented the Paurāṇics. As soon as Master Gurudayal had said that it was not proper to worship idols made of gold, silver and stones, etc. in place of God, the pandits started shouting: "Maharaj! He is calling our Pashupatinath Mahadev a stone. Please allow the thrashing of these rogues." The permission was granted there and then. They started beating both of them mercilessly in the crowded Darbar. The half-dead Joshiji was locked up in a police station. Several Arya Samajists were arrested. What happened to Master Gurudayal is not known till date. Madhav Raj Joshi was fettered and put in prison for two years on Bhadrapada Shukla 13, Samvat 1963.[25] After that he was to be exiled. Next day his children were removed from school and the family was socially boycotted.

Madhav Raj learnt that he may not be freed even after two years. He was worried about his family. So, one day in Chaitra 1964, he, with the help of another prisoner, Madhav Lal, who was a thief, escaped from the prison with the fetters on his hands. After covering some distance, the fetters were broken and thrown in a tank.

Joshiji had five children namely Amar Raj, Shukra Raj,[26] Vakpati Raj,[27] Chaitanya Raj and Chanderkanta. All of them were Arya Samajists.[28] The three elder sons were educated at Gurukul Sikandrabad (U.P.).

After the arrest of Madhav Raj Joshi, Tulsi Mihar, Chakra Bahadur, Amar Raj and Vakpati Raj took the responsibility of the Arya Samaj work.[29] Consequently, they were arrested in 1920. For being the followers of Swami Dayanand, Amar Raj, Vakpati Raj and Chakra Bahadur were exiled from the country, while Tulsi Mihar was imprisoned. The punishment pronounced read as:

"अमरराज, चक्रबहादूर, वाक्पतिराज यी 3 व्यक्ति सत्याचरण मलामो गुठी भन्ने दयानन्दी मत प्रचारगरो देशमा अशान्ति मचाउनेहरूलाई देशनिकाला" ।[30]

Amar Raj and Chaitanya Raj died after some time. Shukra Raj returned to Nepal after his graduation, and was also summoned to the Darbar by Chandra Shumsher Jang Bahadur Rana for a *shāstrārtha* on idol worship with guru Hemraj, who proved no match to Shukra Raj Shastri. Chandra Shumsher Jang Bahadur Rana and Hemraj were worried that he will preach Dayanandism and create unrest in the state.

Shukra Raj Shastri had seen his father and family suffer due to the atrocities committed on them. He, therefore established Nāgrik Adhikār Samiti, and started working for human rights along with the preaching of the Arya Samaj's principles. Prime Minister Juddha Shumsher Jang Bahadur Rana suspected that he was in collusion with Indian political leaders, against the Ranas. Shukra Raj pleaded his innocence but his argument fell on deaf ears. He was put under house-arrest. Later, without the permission of government, he addressed a gathering at Inder Chowk, Kathmandu criticising child marriage, polygamy and use of intoxicants. He said that the Government had taken only half-measures towards raising the age of marriage for girls. For this act, he was arrested and sentenced to six years' imprisonment.

It was a dark period in the history of Nepal. None listened to any argument. The punishment was pre-determined. Only an excuse was needed. The punishment awarded to Shukra Raj is a glaring example of this. One day he was taken out of jail and brought to the Darbar. He paid his regards with both hands folded. Shumsher Jang Bahadur got annoyed as there was practice of greetings with one hand only. Out of anger, Juddha

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Shumsher Jang asked, "Why have you done *Namaste* with both hands?" Shastri replied, "It is all the more gracious." Out of rage Juddha Shumsher thundered, "You are very obstinate. Bring a pistol, he be shot dead." Then he thought for a while and said, "You preach Dayanandism and create revolt. I order that you be hanged till death."

Shukra Raj Shastri was locked in the prison. On the evening of January 24, 1941, he was brought out. Being very hungry, he asked for some food, but even that was denied to him. Shastriji recited *sandhyā* with full devotion. He was chained and put in a lorry to be taken to the bank of river Bagmati. Shastriji recited *Svastivāchana* and *Shāntiprakarna mantras* and certain *shlokas* of Gita on the way. He was taken to a tree on the road to India at Pachali Ghat, Teku, Kathmandu for the hanging. It was midnight, Shastriji said, "You will not be able to tie the rope properly, let me do it myself." Then he recited *Gāyatrī mantra*, uttered the word AUM, tied the rope around his neck, kicked aside the bricks under his feet, and sacrificed his life with a smile on face.[31] Arya Samaj activities were banned and several workers were arrested. After sixteen years, the Arya Samajists of Jhapa re-organised the Arya Samaj. The sacrifices of the Joshi family for the cause of Arya Samaj are matchless. It is only because of these sacrifices that the Arya Samaj got established in orthodox Nepal.

There are twelve branches of Arya Samaj in Pasi district, six in Sunsari district, four each in Rautahat and Morang districts, three each in Jhapa, Bara and Sarlahi districts, two in Saptari district and one each in Ilam, Dhankuta, Terhathum, Siraha, Kailali, Nepalgunj Nagar Banke, Lalitpur districts. Some of the Arya Samajs have their own land and have constructed their buildings. Nepal Arya Samaj is a registered body with its head office at Kathmandu. There are several D.A.V. Schools and two Gurukulas.[32] Swami Sampurnanand, a Sannyāsī from Kurukshetra is planning to establish Maharshi Dayanand Panch Kanyā Vidyapeeth in Nepal. An International Arya Sammelan is being organised on October 20-22, 2016 in Kathmandu.

***Arya Samaj in Pakistan***

Before the partition of India, united Punjab was a strong centre of Arya Samaj. After the partition in 1947, most Hindus migrated to India. However, a fraction of Hindu population stayed back in certain areas of Punjab and Sindh. Thanks to them, there are a few Arya Samajs in Pakistan at present. An Arya Samaj at Ghotki (Sindh) was established in 1912 by Pandit Jeevan Lal, Tarachand Gajra and Mukhi Chela Ram. Kanhiya Lal is an active worker of Arya Samaj there. Swami Dayanand Vidyalaya was established on October 28, 1921 and is now known as D.A.V. Public School. There is a Vedic Dharma Sansthā in Kandhkot and Sindh. An Arya Samaj was established at Halanaka Hyderabad (Sindh) on August 15, 1992 through the efforts of Amerdas Arya, Ambaram Arya, Balchand Arya and Raichand Arya. It has its own temple. In addition to these institutions, a Vedic Dharm Samaj Mandir at Qasimabad, Hyderabad (Sindh) was established on June 12, 1998 through the efforts of Baboo Lal Arya and Ratan Lal Arya. Delegations of Arya Samajists from Pakistan attended the International Arya Conferences held at Delhi in 2006 and 2012.

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***Arya Samaj in Singapore and Malaysia***

Youngman's Arya Samaj was established in Singapore in 1915. Its founder-members were Kanta Rai, K. Comaraswamy and Jawahar Singh. Dr. Bhagat Ram Sehgal went to Singapore, along with his family, in 1926. Impressed with his lectures, Dharmdev Arya and Kanta Rai (originally from Uttar Pradesh) established Arya Samaj on October 8, 1927 in a rented house. It functioned from this temporary location at 42 Rowell Road till 1960. Dharmdev Rai, Kanta Rai and Mangla Prasad Chaubay were the President and Rambaran Rai, Sakaldev Rai and Sidhari Rai, Secretary respectively of the Samaj till 1933.

The visits of Virender Kumar, Manglanand Puri and other preachers from India gave momentum to the work of Arya Samaj. During and after the World War II, the conditions were not conducive for the Samaj to work in Singapore, yet it continued to function. After the war, Durga Das Sachdev, Sridhar Tripathi, Hanuman Rai, Dharampal Kumar, Om Prakash Rai and Madan Mohan Bhardwaj energised it, and it became a healthy organisation. It now runs a D.A.V. Hindi School and Hindi is taught to four thousand students of ninety schools.

The foundation-stone of the new temple of Arya Samaj was laid on March 18, 1961 at 113, Syed Alwi Road. It was inaugurated on January 26, 1963 by Moolamal Sachdev.[33] The Samaj provides facilities for daily prayer, Bal Satsang, Mahila Satsang, marriage ceremonies, etc. The Samaj scholars, who have visited Singapore from time to time, include Swami Dhruvanand Saraswati, Mahatma Anand Swami, Pandit Nandlal Vanaprasthi and Pandit Shyam Sunder Snatak. An International Arya Mahasammelan was held in Singapore on November 1 and 2, 2014.

Arya Samaj was established in the third decade of 20th century at Kaula Lumpur, the capital of Malaysia. The credit for spreading Vedic Dharma there goes to Pandit Kanhiya Lal, a preacher of Arya Vidya Sabha, Varanasi.[34] Arya Samaj was established at Ipoh in 1942. However, it is not very active these days.

***Arya Samaj in Thailand***

The story of the establishment of Arya Samaj at Bangkok, the capital of Thailand is quite interesting. A gentleman by the name of Gajar Bhuj got a copy of Swami Dayanand's Satyarth Prakash from a ragman, and was deeply impressed by its contents. Then Palakdhari Singh and Ramdev Singh and many others at Bangkok took a keen interest in studying the book. Consequently, Vedic Dharm Pracharini Sabha was established at Bangkok on May 5, 1920. Its office-bearers were Ramdev Singh, President, Inder Dev Singh, Vice-president and Palakdhari Singh, Secretary. The Sabha also appointed five preachers to spread the message of Arya Samaj. The Sabha changed its name to Arya Samaj on December 5, 1922. In fact it was already an Arya Samaj with a different name. As this was the only Arya Samaj in Thailand, it was affiliated to Uttar Pradesh Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Lucknow on March 23, 1923. Mehta Jaimini and Thakur Praveen Singh visited Bangkok in 1925 for *Dharma-Prachār*. They left a very good impression on the general public. After that, several leaders of Arya Samaj including Dr. Bhagat Ram Sehgal, Ramesh Swami, Swami Sarvadanand, Pandit Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya, Swami Dhruvanand and Mahatma Anand Swami visited Bangkok. Pandit

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Nandlal Vanaprasthi, Vedic Missionary, is another prominent person who preached in Bangkok and Singapore. The Arya Samaj Bangkok generously contributed during Bihar earthquake in 1934, Hyderabad Satyagraha, 1939 and Punjab Hindi Satyagraha, 1956.

Arya Samaj Bangkok also participated in the campaign led by Netaji Subhash Chander Bose in South-Eastern Asia for the independence of India. In those days the Arya Samaj temple had virtually become a cantonment of the Azad Hind Fauj (INA). The Arya youth of this Samaj, who joined INA, exhibited exemplary courage on front of Manipur and Imphal, and earned the appreciation of Rash Bihari Bose and Netaji himself. Sehdev Singh, Anirudh Shukla, Kasturi Lal were recruited in Arya Youth Officer Training College; Sita Ram Singh Azad, Narsingh Shahi, Kalika Shahi, Ram Singh, Bhagirathi Shahi and Ramdhani Shahi worked in the Radio Receiver and Writers Department of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind.[35]

Today, Bangkok Arya Samaj is a prominent centre of Vedic Dharma and culture in Thailand. It has a three-storey building with twenty-one rooms. There is another block for library and Yajñashālā. It is worth several crores of rupees. Although Arya Samajists are small in number, yet they are making great efforts in preserving the Vedic culture and heritage. They have published Satyarth Prakash in Thai language which was released by Swami Agnivesh. They also organised an International Arya Conference at Bangkok on November 8 and 9, 2014.

***Arya Samaj in Indonesia***

A cultural delegation led by Shrimati Usha Trikha visited Indonesia in 1985. This nineteen-member delegation included Swami Omanand (Gurukul Jhajjar), Dr. Satyaketu Vidyalankar, Dayanand Arya, Shrimati Dr. Kamla Pradhan, Shrimati Dr. Devbala and Virjanand Daivkarni. They thought of establishing an Arya Samaj there.[36] However, the law of the country did not allow any non-Indonesians to preach their religion in Indonesia. So the only option left was to find someone born in Indonesia to do this work. As a result, Dharm Yash, an Indonesian student came to India the same year and Dr. Satyaketu Vidyalankar made all the arrangements for him.[37] Dharm Yash did *Dharm-Prachār* on behalf of the Arya Samaj, while Kanhiya Lal did *Dharm-Prachār* in Java, Medan and Sumatra. As a result Arya Samajs were established there.[38]

## ARYA SAMAJ IN NORTH AMERICA

***Arya Samaj in Canada***

In 1960, one Pt. Madan started helping the Indian community in Canada, in performing *Sanskārs* based on the Arya Samajist tradition. In 1970, the increasing number of Indians coming from India, Fiji, Guyana, Trinidad and Kenya provided scope for establishing an Arya Samaj. Gian Chand Shastri, who had migrated from Nairobi, gathered all his acquaintances from Nairobi and Mombasa, urging them to form an Arya Samaj. As a result, Arya Samajs were formed at several places.

Today, the Arya Samaj centres in various states and cities provide facilities for performing *sanskārs* and celebrating important festivals. Five Arya Samaj mandirs have their own buildings. Arya Samaj (Vedic Cultural Centre) Markham, Toronto established

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in 1996 and Arya Samaj Society of British Columbia, Vancouver are quite active. Arya Samaj Vedic Cultural Centre Markham, Torronto, now known as Arya Samaj Markham, was registered under the name of Vedic Aryan Cultural Society. The founding-members were Jagan Nath Chopra, Kewal Sethi, Om Sharma, Surinder Shahi, Smt. Sarla Bedi, Gian Kohli, Krishan Sharma, Banwari Sennik, Nand Lal Sood and Amar Erry. Most of them had migrated from East Africa. Initially, the members used to hold a monthly meet at a community centre. The membership started increasing with the new wave of immigrants from India, Africa, Fiji and the Caribbean Islands in the late 1970's. In 1980, Amar Erry took over as President of Arya Samaj and the Samaj started having its *satsangs* on a weekly basis. The Samaj built a spacious mandir in 1996. The contribution of Gyan Chand Shastri, B.R. Sunder, Dr. S.C. Sood, Dr. Gurdas Bhandari is worth mentioning. Dozens of Vedic scholars have visited Arya Samaj Markham over the years. Arya Samaj Society of British Columbia was registered on August 19, 1991. Smt. Gita Cheta was elected as the first President. During the tenure of Raghupal Singh as President for almost a decade, considerable funds were raised. The society purchased a property with a donation from Madhu and Hari Varshaney in October 2007. Regular *havans* are held at this centre every Sunday.

Now, there are eight Arya Samajs in Canada, including Arya Samaj at Markham, Peel, Burlington, Mississauga, Scarborough, Ottawa, Vancouver and Vedic Arya Mission at Toronto.[39] Some other Samajs are operating as Havan Groups, but without a proper structural set-up. Arya Mahasammelans were held at Toronto in 1992, 1999, 2003 and 2013 and at Vancouver in 2009.

***Arya Samaj in Trinidad***

According to the 1891 census, about 86 per cent of the Indians in Trinidad were Hindus. Most of them were well acquainted with the principles of Arya Samaj, and hence the visits of Arya Samajist preachers to Trinidad, were well received. Pandit Hariprasad was one of the indentured labourers who came to Trinidad and settled there. He was welcomed by Ramdas Goswami, Budhvir Singh, Pannalal Seth, Siriraj and others who cooperated with him in the propagation of Arya Samaj's ideology and work. Mehta Jaimini reached Port of Spain (the capital of Trinidad) on December 17, 1928. Through his efforts two Arya Samajs, one school and three night pāthashālās were established. An Arya Samaj already existed at Lengua.

Several Muslims, influenced by the preachings of Pandit Ayodhya Prasad, adopted Vedic Dharma. Sohrab Khan and Wahid Ali were the first among them. Kamarbakhat, an African Muslim, also accepted Vedic Dharma on being influenced by Panditji.[40] Panditji laid the foundation stone of Yaguana Arya Samaj on Diwali in 1934. It was inaugurated by Pandit Satyacharan Shastri in May 1935. This was the first Arya Samaj Temple in Trinidad. Later, a school was also opened in its premises.

The work of Arya Sabha gained momentum in Trinidad after 1933. The Arya Samajs of San Juan, Tunapuna, Curepe, Biche, Princes Town, Barrackpore, Penal and Debe built their own temples. A Pratinidhi Sabha was established with Arya Samaj Chaguanas in the centre. The Pratinidhi Sabha was registered in 1943. Presently, there are nine primary schools and two mandirs of Arya Samaj in Trinidad.

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***Arya Samaj in U.S.A.***

Jinda Ram and Siddhu Ram carried the message of Swami Dayanand to America in 1893. They took with them, the literature of Arya Samaj, including books by Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi, and started delivering lectures on their basis. An 'All Religion Conference' was held in America in 1909. Dr. Keshav Dev Shastri represented the Arya Samaj and introduced the English translation of Satyarth Prakash to the foreign delegates and others. Some students had also gone to America for higher studies. Sukh Dayal, who was later known as Swami Satyadev Parivrajak, and Dr. Khanchand Dev who studied medical science in America were among them. They preached Vedic dharma along with their studies. Mehta Jaimini and Pandit Ayodhya Prasad toured America in 1929 and 1935 respectively, followed by Pandit Bhaskaranand. They spread the message of Arya Samaj and influenced a large number of people.

Besides the people of Indian origin, certain Americans were also attracted towards Aryan culture. The Vedic Society of America was established by Dr. Eugene Marcus and Dr. Messy, and its office was located at 4 Cottage Avenue, Mt. Vermon, New York.[41] Regular *havan* and *satsangs* were held there and the Vedic principles were discussed. Dr. Marcus was so impressed by the Arya Samaj that he visited India in 1961, made contact with several Arya Samaj institutions and participated in *Balidān Jayanti* at Ambala Cantt. in 1961.

After Pandit Ayodhya Prasad, several Arya Samajist scholars preached the doctrines of Arya Samaj in America. Among them were Pandit Rishi Ram, Pandit Dharmender Sheel, Pandit Dharmjit Jigyasu and Usharbudh Arya. This helped in the establishment of several Arya Samajs in America.[42] At present there are eight Arya Samaj temples – three are run by the Arya Samajists who came from Guyana, and five by those who came directly from India. A Gurukula is also being run by Dr. Satish Prakash.

Arya Pratinidhi Sabha America is the central body representing all Arya Samajs and Vedic Temples of North America. It was formed under the State of Michigan charter in 1991. The purpose of this organisation is to form and maintain a network of communication and ideas between Arya Samajs/Vedic Organisations, in USA, Canada and other parts of North America to follow and propagate Vedic religion. The founding-members of Sabha were Ramchand Mahajan (Texas), Girish Khosla Vānaprasth (Michigan), Ram Lall (New York), Dharm Jigyasu (New York), Dr. Rajinder Gandhi (New Jersey), Amar Erry (Toronto), Anand Rupnraine (Toronto), Dr. S.C. Soni (Chicago) and Dr. Deen B. Chandora (Atlanta). Vishrut Arya (Atlanta) is the President of the Sabha.

Arya Mahasammelans have been held by the Sabha at Detroit, Michigan (1991, 1995, 2012), Chicago (1993, 1997), New Jersey (1994, 2008, 2014), New York (1996, 2000, 2004), Los Angeles (1998), Florida (2001, 2005, 2010, 2016), Cleveland (2002), Houston (2006, 2015), Dallas (2007) and Atlanta in Georgia (2011).

Dr. Sukhdev Chand Soni and Pandit Dilip Vedalankar organised an International Arya Sammelan at Chicago in 2007, which was attended by several Arya Samaj scholars from India.

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## ARYA SAMAJ IN SOUTH AMERICA

### *Arya Samaj in Suriname*

Arya Samaj has a good influence in Suriname (earlier Dutch Guyana) and (British) Guiana. It was in June 1873 that 410 Indian indentured labourers were taken to Suriname in the Lalarukh Ship. Eleven of them died during the journey. Indian labourers continued coming to Suriname till 1910. Bhai Parmanand visited West Indies and British Guiana in 1911. There, he contacted Paurāṇic Pandit Kunjbihari Tripathi of Nickerie, a western province in Suriname. Kunjbihari was impressed by his lectures and became a follower of Vedic Dharma. The work of Arya Samaj was thus initiated in Suriname in 1912 and in Nickerie in 1918. Slowly, but steadily, the teachings of Arya Samaj became popular in the country. Dal Shingar and Kalika Prasad of Saramacca also came in contact with Bhaiji, and impressed by the teachings of Maharshi Dayanand, they started the propagation of Arya Samaj in Saramacca. Satyarth Prakash reached Suriname along with some other Vedic literature, and its teachings drew the inhabitants of Suriname towards Vedic Dharma. Meanwhile the message of Swami Dayanand also spread to Paramaribo and the surrounding area.

A *havan* was arranged at the residence of Jagmohan Singh on November 8, 1922 and another *havan* at the residence of Pandit Mathura Prasad on March 18, 1923, and a Christian was converted to Vedic Dharma. This was the first *Shuddhi sanskār* in Suriname.[43] Pandit Sheuratan and Pandit Sukhram Hindori had *shāstrārthas* with Christians and Muslims. Shivarātri was celebrated at Paramaribo in 1924 with great enthusiasm. In the last week of 1925, a similar function was organised at the residence of Shivraj Singh attended by several scholars from British Guiana. Prominent among them were Ram Chander Shukla, Pandit Chandrashekhar Sharma and Pandit Ganesh Dutt Sharma.

By 1927, the Arya Samajists had begun to feel the need of a well-knit central organisation. Consequently, the Arya Samajists from various places assembled on August 4, 1927 to establish Arya Pratinidhi Sabha with Mathura Prasad, Jagmohan Singh and Ram Prasad Shukla as President, Secretary and Propaganda Secretary respectively.[44] By this time, Arya Samajs had also been established at Paramaribo, Nickerie, Saramacca, Linden, Pad Van Wanica, Vineland, Marienburg, Alkmār and Canonsburg. Arya Diwakar Mahasabha was established at Paramaribo on September 29, 1929. It was registered in February 1930 with Hira Singh as President and Jagmohan Singh as Secretary. It has a beautiful Arya Samaj Temple, popularly known as the 'Taj Mahal of Suriname'. The new Temple of Arya Diwakar was inaugurated on February 11, 2000. Over 85 per cent of the Arya Samajs are affiliated to Arya Diwakar Mahasabha. The presidents of this body have been – Babu Hira Singh, Chetram Singh, Baijnath Shah, Jagmohan Singh, Mathura Prasad, Shivraj Singh, Oedairay Singh Varma,[45] Bharos, Tribhuvan Singh, Raghubar Singh, Balkaran and Ram Udai. Arya Strī Samaj was established in 1948 in Suriname through the efforts of Smt. Devraji Mangal.

Several Arya scholars, sannyāsīs and preachers visited Suriname for *dharma prachār* from time to time. They included Pandit Mehta Jaimini (1929), Pandit Hariprasad (1932), Pandit Ayodhya Prasad (1934), Pandit Satyacharan Shastri (1935),

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Pandit Bhaskaranand (1936), Pandit Shrutikant (1936), Pandit Narian Dutt (1938), Prof. Ram Sahai (1946), Pandit Premanand (1948), Pandit Rishi Ram (1954), Pandit Usharbudh (1957), Mahatma Anand Swami (1969), Pandit Shrutishil Sharma (1972), Swami Jagdishwaranand (1975), Pandit Prakashvir Shastri (1976), Swami Satya Prakash (1976) and Pandit Shyam Sunder Snatak (1979). Teaching Hindi was a major activity of Arya Samaj there, and today it is the language of the masses in Suriname.[46] Swami Dayanand orphanage was established on October 18, 1933. There are two organisations in Suriname – Arya Diwakar Mahasabha and Arya Pratinidhi Sabha. At present almost all Arya Samaj units and Swami Dayanand orphanage have their independent buildings. International Arya Mahasammelan was organised on September 26-29, 2009 at Paramaribo.

Ramjatan, Suryapal Siddhant Shastri, Devdutt Sukhraj, Pandit Ramdev Raghuvir, Pandit Chanderdutt Tilakdhari, Pandit Surya Prasad Biere, Chanderdutt Rambaran, Rukmani Abilakh and Shushila Baldev are among the prominent preachers of Arya Samaj.

***Arya Samaj in British Guiana***

Bhai Parmanand arrived in British Guiana (now called Guiana after its independence in 1966) on December 28, 1910. In the early stages, substantial support was received from Pandit Matabadal Maraj, Ramnarine, Lachhman Persaud (of Buxton village, East Coast Demerara) Bhajan Devi, Gharbarran Doobay, Chandrashekhar Sharma and others for Arya Samaj. They denounced the ugly system of caste by birth and child-marriage and worked for the freedom of worship, human equality, uplift and emancipation of women, Hindi education and the Vedas for all. The first branch of the Arya Samaj was formally established in 1921 at Triumph village, East Coast Demerara. Pandit Ramnath, Satyanarayan, Ramkheladan and Balgangadhar made special efforts in popularising it. Mehta Jaimini came here from Trinidad in 1928. He emphasised on the teaching of Hindi. He also had a *shāstrārtha* with the Christians. In 1932, another branch of Arya Samaj was established at Skeldon, Upper Corentyne, Berbice. Pandit Ayodhya Parsad who reached Guiana in 1934 performed several conversions that made way for Muslim and Christian Indians to accept Vedic Dharma and become devout followers of Arya Samaj. He prepared ground for the establishment of Arya Pratinidhi Sabha.

Pandit Bhaskaranand remained in Guiana for nine years (1936-1945). He delivered over a hundred radio broadcasts on the Vedas and the principal tenets of Arya Samaj. *Shuddhi* became a principal plank in the work of Arya Samaj during this period. Because of his efforts, words like *Veda, Namaste, Arya, Samaj, Havan, Sandhyā* and *Kṛnvanto Vishwam Aryam* became household words. He contributed to the establishment of more than forty Arya Samajs. He received tremendous material and financial support from Pandit Ramnarine, Matabadal Maraj, Chandrashekhar Sharma, Ramdial Parmo, Ramnath, Ramkhellawan and other Aryas living on the East Coast. He organised the 'American Aryan League' in April 1937 following a meeting of Arya delegates from Trinidad, Guyana and Suriname. The league was registered on February 9, 1938 with Bhaskaranand as President and Beharry Sawh as General Secretary. Land for the permanent headquarters of the Samaj in Guyana was donated by Budhoo. The building

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known as Central Vedic Mandir was declared open in 1945. Bhaskaranand also established Arya Pracharak Mandal. Pandit Usharbudh Arya arrived in 1956 and organised Arya Vir Dal Shikshan Shivirs (Arya Youth Training Camps).

Guyana Arya Pratinidhi Sabha was formally established and registered in 1968 with Prem Persaud as the first President and Headmaster Hari Prasad the first General Secretary.

Dr. Satish Prakash, a Vedic scholar originally from British Guiana, is a principal missionary. He is the founder Acharya of Maharshi Dayanand Gurukula, New York City.[47] Another Arya Samaj leader Pt. Ram Lal is also now settled at New York.

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## ARYA SAMAJ IN EUROPE

### *Arya Samaj in England*

Lala Luxmi Narayan, a staunch Arya Samajist, went from Punjab to London in 1885 to become a Barrister. Through his efforts, Arya Samaj was constituted at London. Its first meeting was held at the residence of another young Indian, Bhagat Ram on April 18, 1886. The meeting was attended by six persons who became the members of the Samaj. The Samaj started growing slowly, and its sixth meeting held on June 6, 1886 was attended by several scholars including Lala Roshan Lal, Lala Uma Shankar, F. Pincott and Sardar Kishan Singh.[48] After this, the weekly *satsangs* were conducted regularly. Pandit Bishan Narayan Dar and Dadabhai Naoroji also attended these meetings.

Arya Samaj, London became very popular among the Indians. However, the number of permanent Indian residents in London was very small. So, its strength dwindled when Lala Luxmi Narayan, Lala Roshan Lal and others returned to India after completing their studies. A change occurred in the beginning of the 20th century, as several followers of Swami Dayanand went to England for higher studies. Prominent among them were Lala Tek Chand and Dr. Chiranjiva Bhardwaja who devoted a lot of time for spreading the ideals of Arya Samaj in England, and ground was thus prepared for its revival.

A Hindu Centre was established in London in 1962. Facquir Chand Saundhi, Dr. K.D. Kumaria, S. Ramchander, Dr. R.N. Bhaskar, P.S. Banarsi, L. Jutshi and K.K. Singh were among its founders. Saundhi became its first President. Prof. Surender Nath Bhardwaj (originally from Hoshiarpur) was elected President in 1966. He served in that capacity till 1978. He conducted *Yajña* and *sanskārs* according to Vedic system in London and other cities. A building was purchased in 1968 for which Chan Rai donated 5,000 Pounds. It provided direction to the activities of Arya Samaj.[49] Vedic Mission London was established on February 8, 1970 through the efforts of Prof. Dilip Vedalankar and K.D. Kapila.

Swami Satya Prakash, Pandit Prakashvir Shastri and Pandit Satyadev Bhardwaj visited London in 1977. On their suggestion, Vedic Mission London was renamed as Arya Samaj. Several scholars donated handsome amounts for purchasing a new building for Arya Samaj, including donations from Satyadev Vedalankar, Satyapal Chadda and Shrimati Bhagwanti Arya. With this amount, a building on Argyle Street was purchased for Arya Samaj.[50] At present there are fifteen Arya Samajs in England. Two of them have

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their own buildings. Acharya Gyaneshwar and Swami Vivekanand Parivrajak have also visited England for *Dharma Prachār.*

***Arya Samaj in Netherlands***

Smt. Devraji Mangal started living at Hague in 1960. She celebrated Diwali at her residence in 1961 by performing *sandhyā* and *havan.* Sermons were also delivered. After that Arya Samaj Hague was formally constituted on April 11, 1964 with four members – Smt. Mangal, Smt. Bala Brega (a Dutch lady), Jaikisoen Ramesar and Swami Prasad Bihari. Pandit Ram Swaroop came to Netherlands in 1967 from Suriname and activated the Arya Samaj. A *havan* was performed at Hague on February 11, 1968, which was directed by Babu Oedairay Singh Varma, former Member of Parliament of Suriname.

There was no central organisation of the Arya Samaj in Netherlands till 1983. Though Vedic Dharm Samaj, Utrecht was in fact nothing but an Arya Samaj. Here the Arya Samajists conducted regular weekly *satsangs* and performed *sandhyā, havan,* and had *Veda kathās* and sermons. Several scholars including Pandit Usharbudh, Yogeshwaranand, Chetnanand, Shyam Sunder Snatak, Agastya Muni and Satyavrat Siddhantalankar from India visited Netherlands on different occasions and preached Vedic culture.

When Suriname (Dutch Guyana) became independent in 1975, the Indians were given the option of either staying in Suriname or of shifting to Netherlands as its citizens. Ninety thousand people (55 per cent Hindus) opted for the latter. They included almost twenty thousand Arya Samajists. After that, Arya Samaj in Netherlands gained momentum and its units were established at several cities including Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Utrecht, Breda, Hague, Eindhoven, Eudom, Amstelveen, Liasion. At present, Netherlands is the leading centre of Arya Samaj in Europe with the number of its followers running into thousands.[51]

Federation Arya Samaj Netherlands (FASNED) was founded in 1986. There is a Pratinidhi Arya Sabha Netherlands (PRASNE) also. Arya Samaj Netherlands organised International Arya Mahasammelan in 2010 under chairmanship of Suren Mahabali. Surya Prasad (Suraj) Biere is the current President of the Samaj.

## ARYA SAMAJ IN AUSTRALIA AND OCEANIA

***Arya Samaj in Australia***

Thousands of Indians migrated from Fiji to Australia after a military revolt in 1987. They established Arya Samajs at Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane in 1987-88. To begin with, the *satsangs* were held at the residences of the members, and then a piece of land was purchased in 2003 at Shanes Park in Western Sydney for Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of Australia (APSA) which was established in 1979. The building has been constructed and it is now the venue for all affiliated Arya Samaj bodies in Australia. The Arya Samajs in North-West Sydney, Liverpool and Hills District are affiliated to it. Arya Samaj Brisbane has its own building where Hindi classes, music classes and *satsangs* are held regularly. It is known as Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of Queensland. Two Arya Samajs are functional at Melbourne – Arya Samaj Victoria and Vedic Pratinidhi Sabha and Arya Samaj of

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Australia. Attempts are also being made to organise Arya Samaj in Gold Coast and Perth.

In 2012, a delegation of APSA members attended the International Mahasammelan held in Delhi. An International Mahasammelan was held for the first time in Australia on November 27-29, 2015 at Arya Samaj Centre at Shanes Park. Delegates from America, England, Fiji, India, Mauritius, Netherlands, New Zealand, Suriname and Singapore participated in the Sammelan.

***Arya Samaj in Fiji***

The first group of Indian indentured labourers (*girmitiyas*), numbering 468, was taken to Fiji on May 5, 1879. In 1921, the total Indian population in Fiji was 68,000 out of which 58,903 were Hindus, 620 Muslims and the rest were Christians. About 4 per cent of the population comprised the followers of Arya Samaj. The Indians were mostly uneducated. Arya Samaj in Fiji was born out of the desire of the indentured labourers (*girmitiyas*) to sustain the religious, cultural and social heritage and provide a social platform for their uplift. The inspiration to establish Arya Samaj in Fiji was derived from the Urdu translation of Satyarth Prakash and it was established on December 25, 1904 at Samabula.. Those who pioneered its formation on that auspicious day were Babu Mangal Singh, Bihari Lal,[52] Gaji Pratap Singh, Nanku Sonar, Pandit Shiudutt Sharma, Basdeo Rai, Inayat Hussain, Inder Narayan, Jagannath Prasad Maharaj and Tikaram Verma. After joining the Arya Samaj, Jagannath became the President of Arya Pratinidhi Sabha. There were several others like Pandit Bhagwati and Pandit Tota Ram Sanadhya, who took a keen interest in the Arya Samaj's activities, though they were yet not its members.

Arya Samaj was established at Labasa in 1906 through the efforts of Pandit Dwarika Dutt with the help of Mangal Kachhi, Hari Krishan Sharma and Narotam Chandra. Several Arya Samajists were propagating the Samaj in different cities and towns of Fiji. These included Chaudhary Randhir Singh at Drasa, Pandit Audhram at Lautoka, Pandit Hardayal Sharma at Nadi and several others at places like Nadroga, Nausori, Nabua, Ra, Tavua, Ba, Navua and Nadrau.

During the first three decades of the twentieth century, Arya Samaj was the sole voice of the Indian community in Fiji. The movement was so powerful that in 1929 when the Indians in Fiji elected their first representatives to the legislative council, two of the three candidates elected were Arya Samajists. From the ranks of Arya Samaj came the first Indian political leaders as well as the founders of the Fiji sugarcane growers' organisation – the Kisān Sangh.

Since 1904, Arya Samaj has contributed meaningfully in the struggles of generations of *girmitiyas*. Arya Samaj movement was firmly established in Fiji by 1912. Swami Ram Manoharanand was the first Arya Samajist preacher to reach there in 1913. Impressed by his lectures, an Arya Sammelan was organised at Drasa in 1916 which was attended, among others, by Hira Lal Seth, Pandit Badridutt, Pandit Hardayal Sharma, Chaudhary Randhir Singh, Pandit Ram Narayan Mishra.[53]

The Christians were busy convincing the military government that Arya Samaj was a seditious organisation, working against the government in the garb of religion. In

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those days, the British government in India was also suspicious of the activities of Arya Samaj, and this information reached the Fiji government through the newspapers. As a result, the followers of Arya Samaj were challenged, their homes searched and their documents and books confiscated. They were prosecuted, and the progress of Arya Samaj, was impeded. However, none of this could hold back the march of the Samaj. Not finding anything against the government in the papers seized from their homes, these were later returned.[54]

The Arya Mahila Mandals and Arya Yuva Dals were an integral part of the Samajs and are very active at the Samaj and the national level.[55]

Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of Fiji was established in 1918 with its office at Drasa. Swami Ram Manoharanand was elected President. Manilal Dr. played a significant role in getting the Sabha registered. There are now around forty Arya Samajs in Fiji with the majority of them affiliated to the Sabha. The Sabha's headquarters situated at its property at 1 Ono Street, Samabula, houses the Secretariat, a Meeting Centre, the Vedic Pustakalaya (Library) and the Vedic Book Centre.

Arya Pratinidhi Sabha commenced facilities for free formal education with the establishment of the Gurukula Primary School at Saweni, Lautoka in 1918. The Sabha lays much emphasis on the learning of Hindi and it is a compulsory subject in its secondary schools. The subject is offered to all students at the primary level.

In addition to this, the Sabha employs locally trained Vedic Teachers (religious teachers) in all its schools to teach religious, cultural values and expound Vedic knowledge amongst the students and the school staff. It was affiliated to Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Delhi on March 28, 1918.[56] It maintained a close link with Arya Pratinidhi Sabha Australia and Arya Samaj Auckland, New Zealand.

The Silver Jubilee of the Samaj was celebrated in the last week of 1928 at Suva and an All Religion Conference was held on this occasion.[57] The major figures of Arya Samaj in Fiji included Mangal Singh, Bihari Lal, Inder Narayan, Shiudutt, Nanku Sonar, Gaji Pratap Singh, Jagannath Prasad Maharaj, Badri Prasad, Vasudev Rai Mishra, Audhram, Seth Hiralal, Pandit Sucha Ram, Radha Krishan, Ram Narayan Mishra, Shivnandan Tiwari, Mahadev Hardayal Sharma, Baleshwar Panday, Randhir Singh, Ram Garib Singh, Baldev Singh, Ram Singh, Dwarika Dutt, Pandit Vasvanand, Shankar Pratap, Ram Jatan, Jai Narayan Singh, Vivek Parsad, Ram Raj, Jangbahadur Singh, Chaudhary Jairam, Nanak Prasad, Thakur Raghuvir Singh, Parmanand Singh, Tota Ram Sanadhya, Kalideen, Inayat Hussain, Balwant Singh and Smt. Bal Govind. Mehta Jaimini reached Fiji on April 1928 and delivered lectures at thirty-five places.

Sometimes shāstrārthas (religious debates) were held with Muslims and Christians, and Arya Samaj thus resisted the conversion of Hindus to Islam and Christianity. Consequently, *shuddhi*[58] were carried out. In the beginning, Shiudutt Sharma and Bihari Lal ably defended Vedic precepts and were engaged in *shāstrārthas* with others. Mehta Jaimini played an important role in combating the Christian conversion process of Indians because of his fluency in English.

At present, there are Arya Samaj temples in all prominent cities where daily *yajña, Veda-pāṭha* and some social-work are conducted. A University in Fiji is run by Arya

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Pratinidhi Sabha. Arya Samaj provides free education to poor children through a Bal Ashram. There is a Vedic Sanskār Kendra at Suva where Bal Shivirs (training camps) are organized throughout the year. Hindi is a living language in Fiji thanks to the efforts of the Arya Samaj.

In the field of education, Arya Samaj has established and manages fifteen preschools, nineteen primary schools, and seven secondary colleges. The sabha also established Arya Bal Ashram (2006) and the Vedic Training centre (2003) where Purohits are trained. Pandit Vishnu Deo Memorial College is the largest of the seven secondary colleges of the Sabha and named after a prominent Arya Samajist, Pandit Vishnu Deo, OBE, a member of Legislative Council in the Colonial government. Of the seven secondary colleges, three are named D.A.V., of which one is exclusively a girls' college.

Fear gripped the Indians in Fiji after the military revolt in 1987. The fear was not without a reason. People of Indian origin were given land on a ninety-nine years' lease by the original inhabitants. When the British gave independence to Fiji, they imposed a condition on the people of Indian origin that they could not purchase the land of indigenous people, and even the lease period was reduced to thirty years. So the future was not very secure and they started migrating to America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Arya Samaj Fiji celebrated its centenary on December 19–25, 2004 at the D.A.V. College, Dayanand Nagar, Nabua and Suva. It was well attended by the Arya Samajists and the general public.[59] Kamlesh Arya and Bhagwan Das are among the active leaders, now.

***Arya Samaj in New Zealand***

Arya Samaj West Auckland was the first Samaj formed in New Zealand on January 23, 2005. The founding members were Harendra Sundar, Kiran Sundar, Baswa Nand, Harish Sachdeva, Audh Ram, Mrs. Prabha Ram, Rakesh Kumar, Sneh Kumar, Suruj Deo Prasad, Arun Prasad, Puran Samujh, Pt. Ramesh Chand, Amrit Sagar, Anita Sagar, Vijay Narayan and Sunila Singh. Arya Samaj Pratinidhi Sabha, New Zealand Incorp was formed and was registered in February 2005. A piece of land was purchased at Papatoetoe at Auckland and a beautiful building was constructed. Thereafter, Arya Samaj Central, Arya Samaj Vedic Satsangs Mandli, Arya Samaj Hamilton, Arya Samaj Wellington, Arya Samaj Wanganui, Arya Samaj Christchurch and Arya Samaj Dunedin were formed. The Sabha has been holding Vedic Shivirs every year, since 2005. Five *purohits* were registered under the Sabha and *Purohit Mandal* was formed in June 2010. Hindi schools are being run by Arya Samaj West Auckland, Arya Samaj Central and Arya Samaj Christchurch. Pandit Gurudutt of Fiji is actively associated with Arya Samaj's activities in New Zealand and Australia.

The Sabha celebrated its tenth anniversary on October 3, 2015 at Massey Leisure Centre. All the Arya Samajs participated in the convention.[60]

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## CONCLUSION

A large number of Indians, mostly from U.P. and Bihar, were taken to different countries as indentured labourers in the nineteenth century. No *Dharmāchārya* or leader even thought of them till the end of that century. The *Paurāṇic pandits* considered a journey overseas as *pāpa* (sin). Only the Arya Samaj undertook the work for their emancipation in the first decade of the twentieth century. It is interesting to note that Satyarth Prakash reached Mauritius, Fiji, Thailand, Nepal etc. before any Arya leader visited those countries. Satyarth Prakash created an awakening among those people, like no other book has done. Wherever the Arya Samaj went, the education of girls and the teaching of Hindi followed. The Indian labourers were mostly uneducated and had no means to follow their culture and religion. They had forgotten their festivals and traditions with the passage of time. The credit for keeping them attached to their religion and Indian soil goes singularly to Arya Samaj. Arya Samaj helped the people of Indian origin to excel in politics also in some countries. As the British Government in India was very suspicious about the Aryas, the Christians and people from other religions, incited the governments against the Arya Samajists alleging that they were carrying out seditious activities in the garb of religion. That was why in Mombasa, Fiji etc., the Arya Samajists were arrested and tortured. Not to speak of non-Hindu countries, even in Nepal the Joshi family was badly tortured. Shukra Raj and Master Gurudayal sacrificed their lives on the altar of idol worship and blind faith. The conditions today have changed and have had their impact on Arya Samaj as well.

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25. Shaheed Shukra Raj Shastri, *Shri Maharshi Madhav Raj Joshi kā Jīvan Charitra*, completed by Vakpati Raj Joshi, Samvat 2015, published by Chander Kanta Devi, pp. 287-355.
26. Shukra Raj was born in 1894 in Varanasi (India) where his father Madhav Raj – An Arya Samajist leader – and mother Ratna Maya Joshi were living in forced exile due to political reasons. Shastriji rendered Brahmasūtra Shankara Bhashya in Nepali.
27. Vakpati Raj completed the book entitled *Maharshi Madhva Raj Joshi kā Jīwan Charitra*. He has also translated *Yogadarśana Bhāshya*.
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# CHAPTER 8

# Arya Samaj Abroad: Mauritius – A Case Study

*Oudaye Narain Gangoo*

Swami Dayanand Saraswati, the founder of Arya Samaj, never visited a country outside India. As such, he did not come to Mauritius to launch the Arya Samaj movement. Instead, it was his magnum opus, the Satyarth Prakash that did so. This masterpiece of Swamiji reached our shores way back in 1898 and stimulated a handful of progressive people to set up a branch of the Arya Samaj on our soil.

How the Satyarth Prakash reached Mauritius, makes very interesting reading indeed. In 1898 a troop from Bengal came to Mauritius. Among the Bengali soldiers was one Bholanath Tiwari who had two books in his possession – the Satyarth Prakash and the *Sanskārvidhi*. While leaving Mauritius in 1901, he handed the two books to Bhikhari Singh, a resident of Vacoas, who was not able to understand their language, and passed them on to Pandit Meghvarna. From him, the two books reached Khemlal Lallah and Ramsurrun Moti respectively, who went through their contents and were deeply impressed. They showed Satyarth Prakash to their friend, Guruprasad Daljeetlal. The latter read it with keen interest and, in turn, showed it to Jagmohan Gopal who was equally overwhelmed. Consequently, they started regular *satsangs* on the Satyarth Prakash, which eventually led to the establishment of the first Arya Samaj in Mauritius.

The founders of the Arya Samaj in Mauritius were the sons of Indian immigrants who came to the land as indentured labourers. They established the first Arya Samaj, exactly seventy years after the abolition of slavery. The early immigrants came to this island shortly after the end of the French rule in 1815. In 1835 another small group of Indians was recruited. However, after 1837, Indian immigrants started landing in large numbers. From 1834 to 1924, about 500,000 indentured labourers reached the shores of Mauritius. The Indian immigrants did not come to Mauritius empty-handed. They brought along with them their sacred scriptures, their respective languages and

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cultures, which were considered as riches from their motherland. They were accompanied, so to say, by the value systems prevalent in the economic, social, political and environmental milieu of India at that time.

Manilal Maganlal Doctor was a great saviour of indentured labourers in Mauritius as well as in the Fiji. On Gandhi's advice, he arrived in Mauritius on October 13, 1907 to combat the injustices the Indian immigrants were suffering from the white oligarchy. He spent four years in Mauritius and created a social, political and moral awareness among the Indo-Mauritian population. Manilal Doctor was a fearless prolific writer, and his articles alarmed the white masters. The *Hindustani,* a paper that he started in March 1909, rendered a great service to the working class and the small farmers. He delivered speeches in Hindi so that the labourers could grasp his message. He spoke against superstitions and the tales of ghosts and witchcraft.

Though he was a Vaishnavite, he looked upon the Arya Samaj as a reliable instrument for social reform. When he was about to leave Mauritius, he had the satisfaction of helping revive the Arya Samaj which had become inactive. He had previously held a meeting at his residence at Port Louis on May 8, 1911 in this connection. Manilal Doctor wanted the Arya Samaj to become a strong body. Before leaving our shores, he gave his press which printed the *Hindustani* to the Arya Samaj for the publication of a Hindi paper. He also sent a great scholar in the person of Dr. Chiranjiva Bhardwaja F.R.C.S., M.R.C.P. to consolidate the local Arya Samaj.

The history of the Arya Samaj movement in Mauritius can be broadly divided into four periods. The first, covers the years from 1903 to 1925, a period which witnessed the birth and development of the Arya Samaj. During the second period from 1926 to 1950, the Arya Samaj Movement faced many ups and downs. The third period covering a span of twenty-five years from 1951 to 1975 is considered as the golden age of the Arya Samaj, due to many historic events. The fourth period, from 1976 onwards, has witnessed a series of important activities.

## THE FIRST PERIOD: 1903-1925

According to Mehta Jaimini[1] and Mohunlall Mohith,[2] the first Arya Samaj was founded in 1903 at Curepipe Road. Khemlal Lallah, Guruprasad Daljeetlal and Jagmohan Gopal were appointed President, Secretary and Treasurer respectively. Ramdhun Poorun adds that the first Samaj was established in Jagmohan Gopal's shop and was named the 'Arya Pratinidhi Sabha Curepipe Mauritius'.[3] According to him, some two hundred persons attended the foundation ceremony. Neergheen Bhavan today stands exactly at the site where the first Arya Samaj was established. A few rules and regulations were framed for the smooth running of the organisation. It was decided that a member would have to pay an entry fee of one rupee while the monthly fee would be fifty cents. On the death of a member, a funeral grant would be provided.

The main activity of the Samaj was to organise religious gatherings in the form of weekly *satsangs.* At these *satsangs,* the Satyarth Prakash was read and speeches delivered. They used to attract a large gathering. It so happened that once idol worship was criticised. This was followed by decrying ghosts, goblins and the worship of the dead

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– *shrāddha.* Not surprisingly, most of the members stopped attending the *satsangs.* Only five persons were left. The activities of the first Samaj thus came to an end. These people took the decision that the money which had been collected from the members would be utilised for the purchase of some books from Lahore to be distributed among the public. In the meantime, discussions on Vedic Dharma continued. The evil of caste system, idol worship and the *shrāddha* of the dead were condemned by Khemlal Lallah and his friends.

In 1907, the Arya Samaj rose from its ashes to resume its activities at Curepipe. Some people were motivated to attend the weekly *satsangs.* Gradually, the number of participants increased. But, as the leaders were involved in condemning some blind beliefs and raising their voices against animal sacrifice, idol worship and *shrāddha* of the dead, the orthodox Hindus did not appreciate it. Hence, the second Samaj too, had to put an end to its activities within a short time.

Khemlal, Daljeetlal and Jagmohan Gopal met regularly at *satsangs* where they read and discussed the Satyarth Prakash. They firmly believed that if its teachings were properly disseminated and followed, many evil practices would be eliminated. Therefore, the Arya Samaj was again established on April 1, 1910 in a vacant house owned by Jankee, at Abbe Laval Street, Curepipe Road with the help of a dynamic group of forty-seven members. Khemlal Lallah, Guruprasad Daljeetlal, Harnam Singh, Damodar Ramdin, Tapsi, Jagmohan Gopal, Ramkhelawon Boodhun were among its active members. Khemlal Lallah became its President while Guruprasad Daljeetlal and Jagmohan Gopal were the Secretary and the Treasurer respectively.

The third Arya Samaj had a life-span of seven months. Its early death is accounted mainly by the absence of most of its members at the weekly *satsangs* as there was no one to lead it. Khemlal Lallah and Guruprasad Daljeetlal, had moved from Curepipe to Richelieu and Port Louis respectively. In the absence of an able leader, this Arya Samaj, too, had to put an early end to its activities.

## THE PORT LOUIS ARYA SAMAJ

The Port Louis Arya Samaj was founded on May 8, 1911, at the Hindu Hotel, at Prince Regent Street in the presence of seventeen people, including Manilal Doctor. The office-bearers were: Khemlal Lallah, President; Guruparsad Daljeetlal, Secretary; Khersingh, Treasurer and Pandit Gaya Singh, Book Keeper. The members included Pandit Jugannath, Pandit Rammanohar, Jagmohan Gopal, Hurnam Singh, Ramjilal, Govind Gopal, Juglal Luggeram, Saddiram, Mahavir and Madholal.

The Port Louis Arya Samaj had no locale of its own. A room was taken on rent in the house of Barrister Manilal Doctor for ten rupees monthly at no. 8 Champs de Mars Road, and weekly *satsangs* were held there on Sundays. After a few months, Ramjilal graciously opened the doors of his house for the activities of the Samaj. Henceforth, all activities were carried out there until the Dayanand Dharmashala was built.

Thanks to the dedication of its founding fathers, the Arya Samaj could come in possession of a plot of land at 16, Frere Felix de Valois Street, Port Louis. On the same plot today, is situated the Arya Bhawan which at the outset was known as the Dayanand

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Dharmashala. The land was purchased on September 17, 1912 for the sum of Rs. 6,000. The Arya Samaj Mauritius was then known as the Arya Paropkarini Sabha.

The pioneers of the Arya Samaj were: Khemlal Lallah, Guruprasad Daljeetlal, Dr. Chiranjiva Bhardwaja, Sumangali Devi, Swami Mangalanand Puri, Swami Swatantranand, Prabhoo Bholah, Pandit Gaya Singh, Ramsurrun Moti, Pandit Cashinath Kistoe, Pandit Aniroodh Sharma, Parvati Devi Sumeri, Bhagwati Devi Gaya Singh and Mehta Jaimini. Khemlal Lallah, also known as Tota Lallah, stood against many social and religious ills. In the words of Pandit Atmaram Vishwanath, he was the Abhimanyu of Mahābhārata. He was an indefatigable missionary who, inspired by the teachings of Swami Dayanand Saraswati, set himself the task of propagating Vedic Dharma in Mauritius. He and his followers fearlessly criticised blind orthodoxy and, in the process condemned religious malpractices. The first Arya Samaj unfortunately had to discontinue its activities in the face of mounting opposition. Orthodox Hindus were not too eager to see a reformist movement like the Arya Samaj, flourish, as it meant a challenge to their privileges. Khemlal Lallah, however, did not lose heart and did his best to assemble some people who were interested in the cause of the Arya Samaj so as to reactivate the dormant society.

Maganlal Manilal Doctor met Dr. Chiranjiva Bhardwaja, at Rangoon, Burma in 1911. The latter was a great Vedic Scholar, well versed in Sanskrit, Hindi and English. Manilal Doctor felt the need to have his services as a Vedic preacher in Mauritius so as to give a boost to the Arya Samaj movement which had just seen the light of day. Dr. Bhardwaja, accompanied by his wife Sumangali Devi and two children, landed in Mauritius on December 15, 1911. He devoted all his energy to eradicate the prevailing social ills and religious malpractices. The orthodox priests opposed and even threatened him. He was asked to stop preaching the doctrine of the Vedas and attending the Arya Samaj gatherings. But he did not falter. Then the orthodox priests advised their followers to picket his consulting room. Facing financial problems, he had to leave Port Louis, sell his car and settle at Vacoas.

Dr. Bhardwaja had to undergo a lot of sacrifices to propagate the message of Arya Samaj. The colonial administration had refused to register Arya Samaj as the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha. Dr. Bhardwaja prepared a new charter and got it registered as the Arya Paropkarini Sabha. He moved from place to place, opened some forty branches and affiliated them to the Arya Paropkarini Sabha. He did his best to put all the branches on a firm footing. Dr. Bhardwaja inspired several young men including Ramsurrun Moti, Prabhoo Bholah and Gopinath Chuttur, and encouraged Jagadguru Seegobin, Ramkhelawon Boodhun and Cashinath Kistoe.

Shrimati Sumangali Devi, the wife of Dr. Bhardwaja, was the first Hindu woman in this country to address public gatherings. Those were the days when women were tied to the shackles of ignorance and their lot was bleak. Girls were not allowed to go to school. Superstitions and malpractices of various kinds were the order of the day. She was a pioneer in her own way. She took the initiative to open a Hindi school for girls at Vacoas. This was a great step indeed. Opposition was raised in several quarters against her. She faced the adverse circumstances unflinchingly. Her faith, virtue and

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intelligence impressed many people. In 1912, she started a campaign to improve the condition of women. She toured the island criticising child marriage and illiteracy.

The first Arya Mahila Samaj - Arya women's wing - was established by her at Vacoas. Apart from Hindi, she taught Vedic prayer - *sandhyā* and also sewing. Many were inspired by her zeal and enthusiasm. Shrimati Parvati Devi, Bhagwanti Makhansingh, Mrs. Cossilah Boolell, Mrs. Jasodia Hari, Mrs. Sudevi Bhima, Mrs. Lakhawtee Hurgobin, Mrs. Lutchmeen Sookhoo, Shrimati Yashoda Phagu, Mrs. Poteeram, Mata Yashoda Dashrath, Pandita Draupadi Matabadal, Pandita Radhika Manee, Mrs. Dhanwantee Ramchurn, Mrs. Sawbhagyawati Powakel and many others followed her example. With the departure of such a dynamic personality, a glorious chapter in the history of the Arya Samaj in Mauritius came to an end.

Guruprasad Daljeetlal, another founder of the Arya Samaj Movement, had a good command over English, French, Hindi and Urdu. He fought bravely against superstitions and ignorance. He served both the Arya Pratinidhi as well as the Arya Paropkarini Sabha with deep devotion as Secretary for twenty long years. He kept the Sabha's record diligently. Thanks to his writings, the source materials were available to write the early history of the Arya Samaj movement in this country. He was very straightforward, generous and hard working. He stimulated the Pandits to perform Vedic sanskārs with dexterity and to hold Vedic kathās zealously. Many persons deeply impressed by his dedication, joined the Arya Samaj.

A monk clad in saffron robe with a radiant face was seen for the first time on our soil on January 28, 1912. He was Swami Mangalanand Puri. Swamiji spent only a short while in our midst. He toured the island and was moved to see Hindus living in abject poverty. They were mostly illiterate and deeply superstitious. The caste system had divided the Hindus into many groups. Women were deprived of education, and child marriage was common. Innumerable gods and goddesses were worshipped. The Christian missionaries were doing everything possible to convert the Hindus. The Hindi language was on its death-bed. The Swami travelled to several places preaching the Vedic Dharma. But people could not understand his Hindi. He had to leave for South Africa. Swamiji underlined the pathetic condition of the Hindu Society in Mauritius, in his travelogue - Africa Yatra.[4]

Before leaving the shores of Mauritius, Dr. Chiranjiva Bhardwaja, persuaded the Punjab Arya Pratinidhi Sabha to send a preacher to Mauritius. Thus in 1914, Swami Swatantranand came to Mauritius. Six months later, Dr. Bhardwaja returned to India.

In his description of Swami Swatantranand, yogi Roopsen Rummun, founder of the Presidency College, Curepipe Road writes, "Tall and fair, young and dashing, simple and composed, resplendent in his gorgeous ochre robe, he commanded the respect of not only the followers of the Arya Samaj but of other Hindus and even non-Hindus. Everyone stared in wonder as this glorious son of the Punjab walked in the towns and villages of the island."[5] Endowed with a dynamic personality, profound knowledge coupled with wisdom, spiritual acumen and a bold vision of life, Swamiji transmitted all his qualities to a decadent Hindu society. Swamiji managed to rouse this community which started looking critically at its social, religious, philosophical and political issues. He criticised the caste system based on birth, condemned the scourge of

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child marriage, superstitious beliefs and the malpractices prevalent in Hindu Society. He appealed to Hindus to respect the basic rights of the downtrodden, women, widows, orphans and the illiterate.

Swamiji made a significant contribution to the progress of the Arya Samaj in Mauritius. He walked fifteen to twenty miles daily and reached remote places to preach Vedic tenets and establish branches of the Arya Samaj. He laid emphasis on the performance of *havan yajña* and the singing of devotional songs. He also preached the worship of the only one Supreme God. He epitomised virtue, purity and sacrifice.

Swamiji was a great lover of Hindi. To him, Hindi was not only a means of communication, but a vehicle for the propagation of culture. Wherever he went, he encouraged parents to send their children to Hindi schools. He himself opened many evening schools throughout the island. He spent two and a half years in Mauritius, and left our shores on November 20, 1916. When India became a Republic in 1950, he revisited Mauritius accompanied by Manilal Doctor.

Among the pioneers of the Arya Samaj movement, the name of Prabhoo Bholah (better known as Bholah Master) is mentioned with great respect. Inspired by the erudition of Dr. Chiranjiva Bhardwaja and Swami Swatantranand, he became an ardent follower of the Arya Samaj. Because of his refusal to adopt Christianity, he had to resign from his post. Prabhoo Bholah accompanied Swami Swatantranand and Dr. Bharadwaj on their journeys to propagate the message of the Vedas. He also opposed the Christian missionaries who were engaged in converting the Hindus. He organised discourses and brought his Hindu brethren to the fold of the Arya Samaj. Bholah Master was very generous, and donated nearly four acres of land located at Pailles to the Arya Paropkarini Sabha. He also helped in the purchase of a plot of land at Frere Felix de Valois Street, near the Champ de Mars on which the Arya Bhavan now stands. After the registration of the Arya Paropkarini Sabha in 1913, he became its first President. Prabhoo Bholah passed away in 1933 after serving the Arya Samaj with great zeal and dedication for a long time.

Gaya Singh, born in India, lived at St. Denis Street, Port Louis, in the neighbourhood of some Punjabis who were the followers of Dayanand. Gaya Singh came under their influence, was deeply impressed by Vedic teachings. While in the Police Force, he spent his weekends and holidays preaching Vedic Dharma. He travelled far and wide visiting every nook and corner of the island in the process. The title of 'Pandit' was conferred upon him. After his retirement, he became a full-time preacher. Bikramsingh Ramlallah states,

> He was well-versed in Satyarth Prakash (The Light of Truth) written by that great Indian reformer (Swami Dayanand). He had learnt Vedic Scriptures. With his vast knowledge of the conditions of Mauritian and Indian Hindus... he preached against obscure dogmas and religious practices, time consuming and foolish rites and rituals, superstitions, casteism and witchcraft, alcoholism and drug addiction... His forceful speeches were appreciated – although in some places fanatics wanted to disrupt the 'prachārs' (sermons). Gaya Singh could face a rowdy crowd alone.[6]

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Pandit Gaya Singh was very kind and generous. One day the sad news reached him that Sundar, who was on the staff of the Aryavir, the organ of the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, had passed away. His wife too breathed her last a day later, leaving behind four helpless children who had no one to take care of them. Pandit Gaya Singh gave them shelter in his house. In so far as this event is concerned, Sir Satcam Boolell has this to say,

> Word went round that the Pandit was giving shelter to orphans. Soon abandoned children began to arrive through the courtesy of people who were anxious to find a place for them. The new arrivals were accommodated at the 'Ashram'. At about the same time a few old people, almost infirm, with no one to be responsible for them, donated all their possessions to the 'Ashram' against board and lodging for their remaining days...[7] Pandit Gaya Singh and his wife could now devote their whole time to the welfare of the inmates... until Pandit Gaya Singh appeared as a saviour, the destitute and the abandoned orphans of our society were turning to the Christian mission as the principal source of aid.

Gaya Singh had to undergo a lot of sacrifice to raise funds to build the Shraddhanand Orphanage. He donated half an arpent of land at Jacob Street on which the Shraddhanand Hall was built. He also gifted the Arya Samaj with twenty-seven arpents of land.

Bhagawati Devi Gaya Singh happened to be the first Arya Samajist Mauritian woman who could play the harmonium and sing devotional songs. She accompanied Srimati Sumangali Devi to many places to promote Vedic Dharma among the women. Being conversant with Hindi, Bhagwati Devi contributed several articles to the Amrit Bazar Patrika. She compiled many marriage songs and published them in a book, *Vivāh Mangal.* Songs from this book, sung by groups of women at weddings, were meant to replace the traditional ones which contained obscene words.

Cashinath Kistoe joined D.A.V. College, Lahore in 1911. He spent five years there studying Sanskrit, Hindi, Vedic Literature and Hindu Theology. He was the first Mauritian to obtain the titles of Vidyavachaspati and Aryopadeshak. He landed in Mauritius in 1916 and was appointed as the priest of the Arya Paropkarini Sabha. He was an outstanding preacher, a talented singer, an excellent teacher, an eloquent orator, a versatile writer, a good journalist, a forceful religious debater and a staunch Arya Samajist. He propagated the teachings of Maharshi Dayanand with great dedication. He founded the 'Aryan Vedic School' in 1917 and opened a number of Hindi schools in different parts of Mauritius. Panditji did his best to prevent the conversion of Hindus. Once, at St. Pierre, on a Sugar estate, more than fifteen persons who had been converted to Christianity desired to be reconverted, and wanted Panditji to conduct the ceremony himself. Alarmed, some Catholic priests came to stop the proceedings but failed to do so. Cashinath, through the *shuddhi* (reconversion) movement, brought many converted Hindus back to the Aryan fold. He had to face a lot of unpleasant situations, but did not lose heart.

Pandit Kistoe devoted his whole life to propagating the Vedas. He was the Chief Editor of Mauritius Arya Patrika, the organ of the Arya Paropkarini Sabha, and later on

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Aryavir, the organ of the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha. He battled against superstitions and ignorance. His efforts and dedication gave momentum to the Arya Samaj movement.

Ramsurun Moti, commonly called Moti Master, was deeply inspired by Dr. Chiranjiva Bhardwaja and Swami Swatantranand. Moti Master was only twenty-two when the Arya Samaj was established for the third time at Curepipe Road on April 1, 1910. He travelled regularly from Union Ducray Estate to Curepipe to attend meetings and *satsangs*. Later, with the collaboration of the Late Pandit Mohabeer Kinnoo, he established a branch in the area of Union St. Aubin Estate and devoted much of his time and energy strengthening the organisation. He served the Arya Paropkarini Sabha, with dedication in various capacities. He urged members to open *baiṭhakas* and Hindi schools for children and adults. He bought several pieces of land, among which was the ground near the 'Taher Bag'. Moti Master was so impressed by Dr. Chiranjiva Bhardwaja that he named his youngest, son, 'Chiranjiva'.

In 1925, the then Governor General, Sir Herbert Read, was received at the Arya Paropkarini Sabha. Moti Master appealed to him to see to it that equal treatment and more scholarships were awarded to students of the primary schools, particularly those who studied Hindi so that they could join colleges run by the State. He also pleaded that Hindi should be taught as a compulsory subject in primary schools. His contribution to several activities aroused much interest amongst the members. The membership increased accordingly. He imported journals and books from India and explained their contents at evening classes. He also participated in the campaign for the right of education for girls and women. Young intellectuals were attracted by his articles in the weekly Arya Pratrika and Arya Samaj's activities, especially public debates, between Sanatanists and Arya Samajists. He motivated and campaigned with a view to giving Vedic marriages the same value as that of the civil marriages. In those times the Hindus were converted en masse to get jobs and to receive favourable consideration, to the detriment of those who chose to preserve their identity and were therefore, treated with disregard and humiliation. Parents were worried about the security of their children. Moti Master acted as a saviour.

Deeply impressed by personalities like Dr. Bhadrwaj and Swami Swatantranand, Pandit Aniroodh Sharma delved deep into the precepts of Vedic Dharma, and did his level best for its propagation. His most important contribution to the Arya Samaj, was the sale of books of Hindi and Vedic Literature at his bookstall. Besides teaching Hindi and propagating the teachings of Maharshi Dayanand, his wife, Jasoda Harry, and he served the inmates of the Shraddhanand orphanage selflessly.

Parvati Devi Sumeri, the first Mauritian Pandita (priestess) of the Arya Paropkarini Sabha, did not receive any education in her childhood, as in those days girls were not allowed to attend school. When in 1912, Dr. Chiranjiva Bhardwaja shifted to Vacoas from Port Louis, Parvati Devi came in contact with the learned Mrs. Sumangali Devi and studied Hindi language and Vedic Philosophy. Drawing her inspiration from Dr. Bhardwaja and his wife, Parvati Devi devoted much of her time to creating awareness among the women. In those days, Hindu women were not allowed to come in the presence of men folk. Parvati Devi had to face terrible opposition. She even

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confronted the nuns who were trying to convert Hindus. She criticised many prevailing malpractices and superstitions.

Arya Kumar Sabha (Young Men's Aryan Society) was founded on April 13, 1925. The Bissoondoyal brothers were amongst its members.

Mehta Jaimini's lectures met with the approval of all communities, save for a few exceptions as could be expected.[8] He provided statistics and suggestions for improving the lives of the people. He had a tape-recorder like memory. His delivery was amusing and was rendered attractive by humor. To him, too, goes the credit of bringing about a revival among the Hindus. In the aftermath of the missionary work of Mehta Jaimini, a strong desire for unity was witnessed among the Hindus. In the general elections held in January 1926, for the first time in the annals of Mauritius, two Hindus – Dhanpath Lallah and Rajkumar Gajadhar were elected to the Legislative Council.

Hence, within a period of twenty years, the Hindu society was transformed thanks to the dedication of the leaders of the Arya Samaj. Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, has rightly pointed out,

> The torch that Swami Dayanand Saraswati lit in India illuminated the shores of Mauritius as well. The Arya Samaj in Mauritius has to its credit, a vast contribution towards the education of women, towards a return to the eternal values of Hinduism, towards a revival of Hindi, among Mauritians of Hindu faith, a feeling of solidarity and of self-reliance. And I look back with admiration and appreciation at the pioneering work done in this connection by Mr. Guruprasad Daljeetlal, Mr. Ramsurrun Moti, Pandit Cashinath, Pandit Jugnandan, Pandit Benymadho, Mr. Mohunlall Mohith, O.B.E., and others whose names escape me and for whom we have equal respect. Some of these stalwarts are no more, but their contribution to our continued social progress stand as a monument to their faith in the common man and social justice.[9]

***The Mauritius Arya Patrika***

The Mauritius Arya Patrika was the mouthpiece of the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha and later of the Arya Paropkarini Sabha. Its publication, in English and Hindi began on June 1, 1911, thanks to the press donated by Manilal Doctor. At the outset it was a monthly but, later on, it became a weekly publication. Its first editor was Khemlal Lallah. In 1914, Swami Swatantranand took the responsibility of editing this paper and did so for two years. Shortly after his departure, the publication came to a halt. On August 17, 1924, the Mauritius Arya Patrika was printed anew. Pandit Cashinath Kistoe and Pandit Atmaram Vishwanath became its chief editors. It appeared fortnightly and this lasted till 1940. Besides the activities of the various branches of the Arya Samaj, many articles related to the freedom struggle of India were published from time to time. This paper aroused the enthusiasm of its readers in Vedic Dharma and Hindi language.

***Antyeṣṭi Sanskār – Funeral Rite***

In Mauritius, in the absence of proper legislation, a corpse could not be cremated and Antyeṣṭi Sanskār performed. The Arya Paropkarini Sabha wrote to the Colonial

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government to seek permission to do so. On May 3, 1918, the Colonial Secretary in a reply to Ramsurrun Moti's letter informed the Sabha that there was no objection to the civil status officer registering the death on the medical certificate produced to him, a copy of which would be retained for purposes of record and the original handed over, to be attached to the application for cremation.

***Maharshi Dayanand's Birth Centenary Celebrations***

Since its inception and up till 1925, the Arya Parokarini Sabha did tremendous work to propagate the philosophy and teachings of Maharshi Dayanand. Through the tireless efforts of the preachers of the period, a new era began in various socio-religious fields particularly in the eradication of illiteracy, superstitions and ignorance, spreading Hindi and disseminating education through the opening of schools, propagating of Vedic tenets by means of sermons, performance of *yajña* and Vedic *sanskārs*, condemnation of child marriage and caste system based on birth rather than worth, protecting Hindus from conversion and re-accepting former converts into the Hindu fold through the *shuddhi* movement, arousing interest in Vedic Dharma by organising religious debates (*shāstrārthas*), spiritual elevation through *sandhyā*, *yajña* and devotional songs, publication of Hindi papers on a regular basis and establishing the branches of Arya Samaj in different parts of Mauritius. Instead of the manifold ways of salutations, the Arya Samajist priests in their preachings requested people to offer greetings to one and all by uttering the word *namaste*.

Thus was reached 1925 – the year of the birth centenary celebrations of Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati. The celebrations took place on February 21 and 22 at Port Louis. A large enthusiastic crowd consisting of both the Arya Samajists and the Sanatanists assembled at the Dayanand Dharmashala to listen to Mehta Jaimini, Pandit Cashinath Kistoe, Pandit Gaya Singh and Ramawadh Sharma.

## THE SECOND PERIOD: 1926-1950

Soon after the centenary celebrations to mark Maharshi Dayanand's birth, a bitter discord arose among the office bearers of the Arya Paropkarini Sabha. The arrogance, jealousy, hatred, aggressiveness of some of the executive committee members and a few Pandits of the Sabha played a vital role in the split that occurred among the Arya Samaj leaders. Consequently, in the election that was held in September 1926, many well-wishers and dedicated workers of the Sabha were defeated. After the election, the Arya Samaj movement was split into two rival camps. The members who had been defeated established the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha.

As a result of the split which shook the Arya Samaj, Pandit Gaya Singh donated all his property to the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha. Gopeechand Chuttur and Guruprasad Daljeetlall respectively presided over the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha. In 1931, Mohunlall Mohith was appointed Secretary and served in that capacity up till 1950. Pandit Cashinath became the head priest and the editor of the Aryavir, the mouthpiece of the Sabha, which was first printed on May 3, 1929 and lasted till 1950.

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On the other side, the Arya Paropkarini Sabha doubled its efforts to compete with the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha. Ramsurrun Moti was its chairman. Pandit Benimadho Suteeram was appointed as head priest and editor of the Mauritius Arya Patrika.

This era witnessed the emergence of a host of social workers, dedicated to the cause and principles of the Arya Samaj. The leaders of both camps became very active. Among them were Pandit Gaya Singh, Pandit Basdeo Bissoondoyal, Pandit Mohunlall Mohith, Pandit Benimadho Suteeram, Swami Vigyanananda, Pandit Deosharan Sayjadah, Pandit Hari Krishna Visharad, Pandit Lakshmandutt Shastri, Pandit Atmaram Vishwanath, Pandit Naraindutt, Pandit Kanhayalal Mishra, Professor Ram Prakash, Ramnarain Ghoorah, Dr Jhugroo Seegobin, Pandit Narain Sanjivi, Deepnarain Padaruth, Ramdhun Poorun, Ramsoobhag Goburdhun, Pandit Balram Appadoo, Gopeechand Chuttur, Ramcharitar Bhogun, Darshan Bonomally and many others.

Pandits from both camps laid emphasis on propagation of the Vedas, the performance of *sanskārs*, the celebration of Hindu festivals, the organisation of *shāstrārthas* (religious debates), and the teaching and learning of Hindi. They did their best to defend Hinduism against the Christian priests. During this period, the number of Arya Samajists increased and many Hindi schools opened their doors. Generous donors made significant contributions to both the Arya Paropkarini Sabha and the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha.

One of the major activities of this period was *shuddhi*. Cashinath Kistoe and some other staunch Arya Samajists launched the *shuddhi* movement with a view to welcoming their brethren back to the Hindu fold. Within a period of twenty-five years, one hundred and fifty Hindus were reconverted.

In 1933, both the Arya Paropkarini Sabha and the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha commemorated the fiftieth death anniversary of Maharshi Dayanand. The former met at the Dayanand Dharmashala while the latter gathered at the Shraddhanand Bhavan at Jacob Street, Port Louis. Both Sabhas seized this opportunity to pay a glowing tribute to Maharshi Dayanand and the commemoration left a deep impression on the mind of everyone present.

In 1933 another memorable event took place at l' Avenir, St. Pierre on the premises of Mohunlall Mohith. Some five hundred women from different parts of Mauritius assembled to attend the first Aryan Women's Conference. Mrs. Bhagyawati Gaya Singh presided over it. Various orators spoke on the emancipation of women, and emphasis was laid on their education. As a result, many Kanya Pāthashālās – girls' schools – were opened.

On December 29, 1935, the Arya Paropkarini Sabha commemorated the centenary celebrations of the arrival of the Indian immigrants in Mauritius under the chairmanship of lawyer Ramkhelawon Boodhun. To commemorate this event, a monument was erected in the front yard of the Dayanand Dharmashala. Stimulated by the unprecedented success of the ceremony, the organisers felt that they must always remain united. Consequently, serious efforts were made to re-unite the Arya Paropkarini Sabha and the Pratinidhi Sabha, but to no avail.

In the forties of twentieth century, the Legislative Council passed a constitutional reform whereby anyone who could sign his name in any language would

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have the right to vote. The Hindu population got its benefits due to the work done by the Arya Samaj in propagating Hindi throughout the island. Hundreds of Hindi schools were opened. Because of the knowledge of Hindi and other Oriental Languages, the total number of voters on the roll increased from 11,844 in 1946 to 71,569 in 1948. Consequently, the result of 1948 General Election was in favour of the Hindus. Out of nineteen seats contested, eleven were won by Hindus. Similar trends continued in the general elections held in 1953, 1959, 1963 and 1967.

***A Mammoth Social Gathering***

In January 1950, a mammoth social gathering was organised with the collaboration of the first High Commissioner of India, Dharma Yashdev, who arrived in Mauritius in 1948. He was pained to see the two factions of the Arya Samaj, struggling for the same cause. On his request, Swami Swatantranand revisited Mauritius in 1950 and performed the tedious task of merging the two Sabhas into Arya Sabha. Ramnarain Ghoorah, Dr. Jhugroo Seegobin, Mohunlall Mohith, Rampersad Neewoor, Sir Satcam Boolell and others played a key role in this regard. All the property of the two Sabhas, movable or immovable, was transferred to the Arya Sabha on May 13, 1950. After the birth of the Arya Sabha Mauritius, Swamiji left for India, early next morning. The Aryavir was then the mouthpiece of the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha and Jagriti that of the Arya Paropkarini Sabha. Both publications were merged into Aryodaye.

## THE THIRD PERIOD: 1951 TO 1975

Unfortunately, the newly born Arya Sabha had a short lifespan due to endless dissensions among the members of its executive committee. Members of the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha broke off and resolved to set up a new Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, which came into being in 1954. On January 5, 1957, Swami Dhruvanand came to Mauritius. He put a lot of efforts to re-unite the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha and the Arya Paropkarini Sabha. Swamiji's efforts were crowned with success. The two rival factions were re-united and the Arya Sabha Mauritius was put on a solid foundation.[10]

This period was blessed by the visits of a host of Vedic missionaries from India. These missionaries, with the help of the local Pandits and office bearers of the Arya Sabha, made it a golden period in the history of the Arya Samaj. Such leaders and workers include Narayan Swami, Mahatma Anand Bhikshu, Swami Dhruvanand Saraswati, Swami Abhedanand, Swami Akhilanand, Mahatma Anand Swami, Swami Satya Prakash, Acharya Vaidyanath, Acharya Krishna, Pandit Narendra, Swami Vidyanand Videh, Pandit Ramlagan Ramroop, Pandit Basdeo Domah, Pandit Bholah, Pandit Gopeenath Cheetamun, Pandita Dropadi Matabadal, Rampersad Neewoor, Ramdhan Poorun, Juskurun Mohith, Teeluckparsad Callychurn, Sir Satcam Boolell, Ramkreet Jugessur, Ramlall Gumani, and Heeralall Chooroomoney.

The Indian immigrants brought with them, some Hindu festivals to this country. They used to celebrate Sankranti, Maha Shivaratri, Deepavali and Holi traditionally. Holi was celebrated in such an indecent way that people of other faiths used to call it 'Fete Pagla', or the Fools' festival. Being a reformist movement, the Arya Samaj did its

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best to improve this state of affairs. The Arya Samajist Pandits laid emphasis on the religious and spiritual aspects of Makara Sankranti, Rishi Bodha Utsav, Shravani Parva, Deepavali, Rishi Nirvana, Ram Navami, Krishnashtami, Sitashtami, Dayanand Jayanti, Shraddhanand Balidan Divas, etc.

***The Golden Jubilee of the Arya Samaj***

The golden jubilee of the Arya Samaj was celebrated on May 10-16, 1960 at the seat of Aryan Vedic School, Vacoas in the presence of Swami Dhruvanand. The fiery speeches of Swami Dhruvanand and Prof. Ram Prakash aroused much interest in the audience. Jaynarain Roy stressed on the contribution of the Arya Samaj in the field of education.

***The Independence Day Celebrations***

The Arya Samaj played a crucial role in the struggle for the independence of Mauritius. This fact is acknowledged by all political leaders of the country. On March 12, 1968, Mauritius obtained independence after a long struggle. The main leaders of the Independence party, Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, Hon. Sookdeo Bissoondoyal and Hon. Abdul Razack Mohammed were fully supported by the Arya Samaj. They organised a series of events, to which these leaders were invited to address the gathering. Some influential workers of the Arya Samaj went from door to door to convince Hindus to vote in favour of independence. The Arya Samajists played an important role in establishing a political awareness and a rare unity among Hindus.

The Arya Sabha organised the Independence Day celebrations on a grand scale, and a *yajña* was performed at every branch of the Arya Samaj.

It was at the request of Jaynarain Roy that the Arya Sabha organised the Diamond Jubilee Celebrations on May 9-12, 1970 at the Arya Bhavan, Port Louis. The various activities during the celebrations brought many Hindus together. According to Mohunlall Mohith, almost forty thousand Hindus participated in the *Nagar Kirtan.* Swami Vidyanand Videh had been invited from India for this historical celebration. Dr. Hariduth Ghoorah, Professor Ram Prakash, Moonindranath Varma and Jaynarain Roy addressed the gathering. They stirred the emotions of the audience in their speeches.

***The Twelfth International Aryan Conference***

On a decision of the Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha – (International Aryan League), New Delhi, the Arya Sabha Mauritius agreed to hold the 12th International Aryan Conference on August 22-26, 1973. It was organised under the aegis of the Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, and was a landmark in the history of the Arya Samaj.

The *Maha Sammelan* was preceded by a *mahayajña.* It was unprecedented in its character. Acharya Krishna, later Swami Dikshanand, was the Brahma or the chief priest of the *yajña.* The local Pandits offered oblations and Brahmacharis from a Gurukul near Aligarh enthralled the audience with Vedic hymns. They were assisted by Pandit Nardev Vedalankar of Durban. Seven hundred delegates had come from India by the M.V. Akbar. The General President of the Sammelan was Pratapsingh Shoorji Vallabhdas. At the closing ceremony of the International Aryan Conference several resolutions were passed.

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***The Centenary Celebrations of the Foundation of the Arya Samaj***

The centenary celebrations of the foundation of the Arya Samaj in India were held in Mauritius on April 10-12, 1975 at the Arya Bhavan, Port Louis. The then Governor General, Sir Raman Osman, in his message said, "The Arya Samajists were preaching a new way of life rather than expounding doctrinaire principles of a new religion. Proof that they were on the right track is that the Arya Samaj society is today a growing organisation with innumerable adherents. Judging from its past performance, we have every reason to hope that the society which is now firmly established in Mauritius will go from strength to strength."[11]

Justice Droopnath Ramphul in his message underlined: "In Mauritius, the Arya Samaj has played a prominent part in the spreading of Swami Dayanand Saraswati's spiritual message and the teaching of Vedic Culture. The greatest achievement is undoubtedly in the sphere of education. Arya Samaj schools can be found in towns and villages all over the island."[12]

On the last day of the celebrations, Monseigneur Jean Margeot, the then Archbishop of Port Louis, the Chief Imam of Jummah Mosque, Acharya Vidyanidhi Pandey, the Chief Priest of the Sanatan Dharma Federation who had come from India and other eminent personalities graced the celebration with their august presence.

## THE FOURTH PERIOD: 1976 TILL DATE

This period has witnessed the opening of many branches of the Arya Samaj in every nook and corner of the island. Magnificent Arya Mandirs were built in almost all districts. Emphasis was laid on Veda Prachār, education and social work. Several International Aryan Conferences, seminars and workshops were organised to give a boost to the Arya Samaj movement.

Those who have rendered services to the Arya Sabha and the Arya Samaj during this period, include: Mohunlall Mohith, G.O.S.K., Sookhoo Ramprasad Neewoor, Sudevi Bhima, Lakhawtee Hurgobin, Sowbhagyawatee Powakel, Moolshankar Ramdhonee, Hareeduth Ghoorah, Daiwooreecee Boolell, and Rajendrachund Mohith. Others like Prof. Soodursun Jugessur, Roodrasen Neewoor, O.N. Gangoo, Pahlad Ramsurrun, Satyadeo Peerthum, Rajnarain Guttee, R.P. Ramjee, B. Jeewuth, B. Tanakoor, J. Lallbeehary, H. Ramdhony, B. Boolaky, G. Teeluck, Mrs. Danwantee Ramchurn, Mrs. Indranee Boodhoo and others are serving the Arya Samaj with great zeal.

In order to carry out various activities effectively, the Sabha has set up a number of sub-committees viz. the Veda Prachār Samiti, the Hindu Education Authority, the D.A.V. College Committee, the Vidya Samiti, the Gaya Singh Ashrama Samiti, the Finance Committee, etc.

***The Veda Prachār Samiti***

From 1975 to date, the Arya Sabha has invited several Indian scholars to propagate Vedic Dharma under the aegis of the Veda Prachār Samiti. Among them are Pandit Vedpal, Swami Sanjivini, Prakashvir Shastri, Swami Divyanand, Acharya Ved Bhushan,

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Pandit Sukhdev Shastri, Dr. Kapildev Dwivedi, Pandit Shyam Sundar Snatak, Swami Divyananda, Swami Satyam, Dr. Usha Sharma, Professor Bhawani Lal Bharatiya, Acharya Gyaneshwar, Acharya Ashish, Acharya Narendra and Swami Ashutosh. Most of them provided training to the priests of the Arya Sabha.

The Sabha constituted several committees which have rendered commendable services. In 1995, the Arya Sabha opened an Ashram, to cater to the needs of the elderly, on a plot of land donated by Jadoonanan Ballgobeen at St. Paul. A one-storey building of 6,000 square feet could thus be put at the disposal of the needy. Prior to this, another two-storey building was completed on the premises of Aryan Vedic School, Vacoas.

In 2005, a huge three-storey building was constructed in the North of Mauritius to accommodate fifteen hundred students of the D.A.V. College. Another building of ten thousand square feet was put at the disposal of the D.A.V. Degree College to start Degree Courses at Pailles. This building was constructed, thanks to the generous donation of the late Dr. Hansa Gunessee. In 2013 a two-storey building was completed in the South of Mauritius to house the Vedic Centre on the first floor, and a special educational need school on the ground floor.

The dissemination of education has been one of the main objectives of the Arya Samaj movement in Mauritius since its inception. Hundreds of Kanya Pāthashālās were set up in the Arya Samaj Mandirs and Baithaks. Arya Sabha Mauritius is now running twenty pre-primary schools, two primary schools, two secondary schools (D.A.V. Colleges), two hundred Hindi schools and the D.A.V. Degree College.

The Sabha has, since 2006, expanded its activities to include post-Secondary education. The D.A.V. Degree College is duly registered with the Tertiary Education Commission and is licensed to run courses leading to B.A. and M.A. (Hindi, Sanskrit, English, Philosophy) degrees from the Kurukshetra University, India. This institution is meant to contribute to capacity building in terms of trained social workers. The first cohort of B.A. and M.A. students passed out on October 17, 2010.

***Ārsha Gurukula***

Nestled in the lap of nature at l' Avenir, partially surrounded by the Moka – Port Louis range of mountains and the greenery, the 'Ārsha Gurukula' was established by the Arya Sabha in October 2001. The pleasant atmosphere and tranquillity of the campus provides and environment, conducive to the purpose of learning.

Dr. Oudaye Narain Gangoo was then the Secretary of the Arya Sabha, and Dr. Usha Sharma, an Indian citizen well-versed in Sanskrit and Vedic literature, was made the Acharya of the Gurukula. After five years of study many students were qualified as Pandits and Panditas to serve the Arya Sabha.

***Conferences***

A national organising committee was set up under the chairmanship of Dr. Roodrasen Neewoor in 1990 to celebrate the 80th anniversary of the Arya Samaj in Mauritius. These celebrations took their origin from the third establishment of the Arya Samaj which was founded at Curepipe Road. Swami Satya Prakash was invited from India on this historic

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occasion. Swamiji toured the island and delivered a series of lectures. The main celebration, a symposium, took place at the Octave Wiehe auditorium.

An International Arya Youth Conference was organised by the Arya Sabha in the auditorium of the M.G.I. on December 8-10, 1995. Young delegates from the Arya Samaj movement came from Nairobi, U.K., and the Republic of South Africa.

***The Centenary of the Introduction of the Satyarth Prakash in Mauritius***

To mark the 100 years of the advent of 'Satyarth Prakash', an International Conference was jointly organised by Arya Sabha and the Mahatma Gandhi Institute on September 27-29, 1998.[13] On the auspicious occasion, a commemorative book, *"Major Figures of the Mauritius Arya Samaj"* was published by the M.G.I. The M.G.I. invited Professor (Dr.) Ram Prakash[14] and the Arya Sabha invited Captain Deo Ratna Arya, Vandemataram and Sachidanand Shastri from India, and Dr. Rambilas from Durban,.

A host of scholars from abroad as well as from Mauritius expressed their views on the Satyarth Prakash. Prof. Uttama Bissoondoyal, Shri Moolshankar Ramdonee, Dr. Roodrasen Neewoor, Dr. Oudaye Narain Gangoo, Mrs. Vinod Bala Arun and Mrs. Poornima Ragoobar were among the speakers.

A three day *mahayajña* was performed at the Neergheen Bhawan, Curepipe Road, where the first Arya Samaj was established. The Yajña was followed by a Nagar Kirtan, – a religious procession, in which took part Shri Manilal Tripathi and Hon. Kailash Purryag the then Deputy Prime Minister.

An International Arya Mahila (Women's) Conference was held on November 22-25, 2001 at the Indira Gandhi Centre for Indian Culture. The theme of the conference was, "The role of women in the third millennium." Scholars from India, South Africa, Nairobi and Mauritius presented papers, and the key address was delivered by Mrs. Ujjwala Varma of New Delhi. A special issue of *Aryodaye* was published to mark this International Arya Mahila Conference.

***The Centenary of the establishment of the Arya Samaj***

Arya Sabha Mauritius organised a three-day International Aryan Conference on December 5-7, 2003 to mark the Centenary Celebrations of the establishment of the first Arya Samaj unit in Mauritius way back in 1903 at Curepipe Road. The Delegates who participated in the Conference came from India, Fiji, Nairobi (Kenya), South Africa, the United Kingdom, Netherlands among other countries. Dr. Ram Prakash was nominated as the General President of the International Aryan Conference.

The celebrations began with a *Bṛhad Yajña* and prayers conducted by Dr. Usha Sharma at Arya Bhawan, Port Louis on the morning of December 5. Dr. Oudaye Narain Gangoo, President of the Arya Sabha, welcomed the delegates. Professor Bhawani Lal Bhartiya introduced the theme of the conference. Tracing the history of the Arya Samaj movement, Professor Ram Prakash, General President of the Conference, expressed his deep appreciation for the good work done by the Arya Samajists of Indian origin in different countries.

The Conference was formally inaugurated in the afternoon by H.E. Sir Anerood Jugnauth, President of the Republic of Mauritius, at Morcellement St. Andre, Plaine des

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Papayes. Dr. Oudaye Narain Gangoo welcomed H.E. Sir Anerood Jugnauth. Professor Bhawani Lal Bhartiya introduced the General President, Dr. Ram Prakash. His Excellency Pripuran Singh, Indian High Commissioner, mentioned the deep cultural ties which bind Mauritius to India. Dr. Ram Prakash paid homage to the memory of the major figures of the Arya Samaj in this country. He dealt with social work, particularly that relating to the emancipation of the women and the downtrodden, carried out by the Arya Samaj in various countries. Mrs. Sarojini Jugnauth launched the 'Smarika', the souvenir magazine, on this occasion. H.E. Sir Anerood Jugnauth laid the foundation stone of the Form Sixth D.A.V. College and also expressed his appreciation for the work done by the Arya Sabha in various fields.

During the next three sessions of this seminar chaired by Prof. Soodursun Jugessur, Dr. Usha Sharma and Prof. Bhawani Lal Bhartiya respectively, papers were presented by various delegates after a welcome address by Dr. O.N. Gangoo. Dr. Roodrasen Neewoor (Mauritius), Hon. Kamlesh Arya (Fiji), B.D. Soman (East Africa), Dr. Rambharos (S. Africa), M.M. Sharma (U.K.) and Satyadeo Peerthum (Mauritius) described the history of Arya Samaj movement in their respective countries. D.K. Bhalla (Nairobi) expressed his concern about the future of Arya Samaj in Nairobi, and pleaded for setting up a regional centre in Mauritius to give a boost to the movement.

Prof. Ram Prakash further announced that keeping in view the valuable services rendered by Dr. O.N. Gangoo, the Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, New Delhi has conferred the title of 'Arya Ratna' on him. He then moved four resolutions which were unanimously approved. These resolutions welcomed the decision of the government to consider the marks obtained in the CPE examination for the purpose of grading w.e.f. 2004, establishing a regional centre of Arya Samaj in Mauritius for translating the Arya Samaj literature in various languages and establishing Maharshi Dayanand Chair at M.G.I., Moka.[15]

***International Arya Mahasammelan 2008***

In September 2008, a four-day International Arya Maha Sammelan was held in the compound of D.A.V. College, Morcellement St. Andre attended by some four hundred Indian delegates and a hundred from other countries. Several thousand people gathered everyday to listen to the Arya leaders from various countries. In his message, the Prime Minister, Dr. the Hon. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, stated that in Mauritius, the movement set up by Swami Dayanand comprised four hundred branches running Hindi classes along with religious and charitable activities. Professor Ram Prakash, Rajsingh Arya, Vinay Arya, Dharmapal Arya, Mahashay Dharmapal and Acharya Baldev addressed this sammelan.

***Centenary Celebrations of the arrival of Dr. Chiranjiva Bhardwaja***

The 100th year of the arrival (to Mauritius) of the renowned Vedic Scholar, Dr. Chiranjiva Bhardwaja, was celebrated with a series of activities in December 2011. Professor Ram Prakash was the guest of honour. The Arya Sabha commemorated this auspicious occasion in collaboration with the Municipality of Port Louis. To mark this centenary Celebration a monument was unveiled in the Company Gardens of Port

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Louis. In his message the Rt. Hon. Sir Anerood Jugnauth, then President of the Republic paid a glowing tribute to Dr. Chiranjiva Bhardwaja. He remembered him as the first great leader of the Arya Samaj movement in Mauritius.[16]

***International Conference, 2013***

To mark the 100th anniversary of the registration of the Arya Paropkarini Sabha, an International Aryan Conference was held at Union Vale in the compound of the newly built Vedic Centre from December 5-8, 2013. Professor Ram Prakash was the chief guest. Delegates from India, and other countries were present. A two-storey magnificent building was inaugurated by the President of the Republic of Mauritius, Shri Rajkeswar Prayag. Harridev Ramdhony, Bissessur Rakhal, Bharat Mungroo, Dharamveer Gangoo, Deoduth Somnah were among the chief organisers.

The Arya Samaj movement is firmly established on our shores. It is very dynamic and its presence is felt over the island. Its story is characterised by vision, perseverance and dedication. The past has been glorious and future looks bright.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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2. Mohunlall Mohith, *Arya Sabha Mauritius kā Itihāsa*, Arya Sabha, Mauritius, p. 10.
3. Ramdhun Poorun, *Mauritius Arya Samaj kā Itihāsa*, Rose Hill, Mauritius, p. 25.
4. Pahlad Ramsurrun (ed.), 2001, *Glimpses of the Arya Samaj in Mauritius*, Sarvadeshik Prakashan, New Delhi, p. 28.
5. *Aryodaye*, April 1994, published by the Arya Sabha Mauritius, p. 25
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*, p. 26
8. Pahlad Ramsurrun, 1970, *Illustrated History of the Arya Samaj Movement in Mauritius*, Mimi Printing, Beau Bassin, Mauritius.
9. *Aryavir*, August 24, 1929, published by Arya Paropkarini Sabha, Mauritius.
10. The headquarters of the Arya Sabha are housed in a magnificent building – the Arya Bhavan – in the vicinity of the Champ de Mars along Frère Félix de Valois Street. It is now known as 'Maharshi Dayananda Street'.
11. *Aryodaye, Special Issue* (April 1975), p. 56
12. *Ibid.*, p. 60
13. Professor Uttam Bissoondoyal, the nephew of Professor Basdeo Bissoondoyal, was the then Director of M.G.I., Moka.
14. It may be noted that Professor Ram Prakash referred to earlier is a different person than the one mentioned here. The earlier Ram Prakash is known for his contribution towards the teaching of Hindi. Professor (Dr.) Ram Prakash attending this conference remained actively associated with various activities in Mauritius after 1998 till date. He visited the island 10 times. He is one of the Editors of the present volume.
15. O.N. Gangoo, 2004, *The Arya Samaj Movement in Mauritius and South Africa*, Executive Director of Tertiary Education Commission and Mohunlall Mohith foundation, pp. 290-295.
16. *Souvenir Magazine – Centenary Celebrations of the Arrival of Dr. Chiranjiva Bhardwaja*, December 2011, published by Arya Sabha, Mauritius, p. 2.

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# CHAPTER 9

# The Vedic Trinity: The Guru, the Swami and the Disciple

*Ram Prakash*

India's greatest wealth are the *ārṣa granthas*, the scriptures composed by ancient rishis for the welfare of the entire humanity. These granthas are the result of their penance and deep study of the Vedas. Yudhisthira Mimamsaka notes,

> The absolutely original composition of classical treatises was not done by any rishi. Every rishi articulated only what had already been enunciated and modified it to the extent that made it relevant to the contemporary situation. This becomes clear if we compare Pāṇini Vyākaraṇa (grammar) to the available sūtras of ancient classics preceding it. There is only a marginal difference, may be that of a few sūtras or texts, between Pāṇinīya śikṣā and Āpiśala śikṣā that came before it.[1]

With the passage of time, the interest in *ārṣa granthas* declined, and problem was compounded by popularisation of many *anārṣa* granthas, written for personal gains, by those who were not seers. Initially, some of them were not sure about the acceptance of their writings. Vāg Bhaṭṭa, for example, feared that his book may not be well received in place of *Charaka* and *Sushruta*.[2] Later, such books were written freely and gained ground instead of the *ārṣa granthas*. Even the Vedas and the Vyākaraṇa were not spared. Consequently two thousand years ago, Vyāḍi's work on grammar *Saṅgraha*, got lost. Patañjali's immortal *Mahābhāshya* suffered near-oblivion several times.[3] *Prakriyā Kaumudī*, *Chandrikā*, Bhattoji Dikshit's *Siddhānta Kaumudī*, *Manormā*, *Shekhra* etc., became popular replacing Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī*. The fall of the scholars, in terms of their motives and attitude is exemplified by the case of one such grammar, *Sārasvata*, which was composed by Anubhūtisvarūpāchārya in a single night. Because of age he had lost

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his front teeth. Therefore, he lisped and instead of *puṁsu* he pronounced *puṁkṣu*. Hearing this, some other scholars made fun of him. But the old man did not accept that his pronunciation was faulty and on returning home compiled *Sārasvata* of seven hundred *shlokas* overnight to reassert his point of view.

The books on Tantra were composed likewise. Some of them are critical of the Vedas and many are replete with contradictions. In *Gyānasankalini Tantra*, the Vedas and the Purāṇas are compared to a prostitute and in the *Shambhu Tantra* these have been termed a secret daughter-in-law.[4] *Mahānirwāna Tantra* states, "Continue to drink till you get destabilised."[5] It is obvious, therefore, that such books are not based on the Vedas.

The situation with the Purāṇas is no better. *Bhāgavata-purāṇa* containing 12 *skandhas*, 335 *adhyāyas* and 18000 verses is recognised as *Mahāpurāṇa* by the Vaisṇavas. The followers of this Purāṇa claim that it was written by the seer Vyāsa.[6] In fact, it is the work of Bopdev who also wrote *Mugdhabodha* grammar for this Purāṇa. In this *Bhāgavata-purāṇa* does not spare even Sri Krishna. The vulgar love-dialogues found in '*Chīraharaṇa*' (stealing of the robes) chapter of *Bhāgavata* are not in consonance with the pious life of Yogeshvara Krishna.[7] In a later compilation, *Gopāl Sahasranāma*, among the one thousand names of Lord Krishna, two names are *Gopālakāminījāraḥ* (गोपालकामिनीजारः) and *Caurajāraśikhāmaṇi* (चौरजारशिखामणि), which mean that Krishna is a paramour and chief of the unchaste persons. Certain shlokas in *Shiva-purāṇa*, *Padma-purāṇa*, *Bhavisya-purāṇa*, *Brahmavaivarta-purāṇa*, *Bhāgavata-purāṇa* etc., are too vulgar to be quoted.[8] Furthermore, the way God has been visualised in *Bhāgavata*[9] does not tally with the Vedic descriptions. The God, according to the Vedas, is formless.[10] There are numerous contradictions in the Purāṇas. Whereas *Padma-purāṇa* says that a foolish Brahman who worships a deity other than Viṣṇu is condemned to go to the devil,[11] *Mārkaṇḍeya-purāṇa* rates *Devi-Bhāgavata* as the highest.[12] Numerous such examples can be quoted. An amusing example of such writing is that the English words like Sunday, February, Sixty occur in the following shloka of *Bhavisya-purāṇa*:[13]

*Ravivāre ca saṇḍe ca phālgune caiva pharavarī. Ṣasṭiśca sikstī jñeyā tadudāharamīddaśam.*

The English language is neither as ancient as Sanskrit nor could the Vedic seers have known it. How can such books be claimed as the works of the rishis?

It is unfortunate that whatever was written in Sanskrit was considered a *Shāstra*. This resulted in a lack of interest in the Vedas, and a misinterpretation of the scriptures, which in turn led to evil practices like idol worship, denigration of women, superstitions, blind faith and so forth. Such a situation has prevailed for at least the last two thousand years or so. No reformer could diagnose the problem correctly. Many did make the efforts through the centuries, but to little consequence. However, in recent times, a trinity of modern rishis has brought about a revolutionary change.

## THE GURU: VIRJANAND DANDI

The visionary Swami Virjanand Dandi (1779-1868) was the first person in the recent times to get to the root of the problem. Born, brought up and educated in a Paurāṇic

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environment, he too studied and taught *anārṣa granthas* of grammar written by the ordinary people for decades. This continued even during his stay at Mathura till 1859. However, this was soon to change.

A simple dispute over grammar was to become an event, most significant for the rediscovery of *ārṣa granthas* and the Vedic dharma. The dispute occurred between Dandiji's disciples Gangadutt Chaubey and Rangadutt Chaubey on the one side and the Pandits of a wealthy Seth Radhakrishna of Mathura and the followers of Rangacharya of Varindavan temple, Lakshman Shastri and Murmuriya Pandya on the other, regarding the compound (*samāsa*) in अजाद्युक्तिः (*ajādyuktiḥ*). Dandiji's students considered the compound a षष्ठी तत्पुरुष (*ṣaṣṭhī tatpuruṣa*) and the other two Pandits declared that it was सप्तमी तत्पुरुष (*saptami tatpuruṣa*). Dandiji supported his students while Shastri and Pandya received support from their patrons and Krishna Shastri. It was decided that a debate be held between Dandiji and Krishna Shastri.[14] The time, date and the place of the debate were decided. People converged to Gatāshramanārāyaṇa temple, the venue chosen for the debate, on the appointed day, but Krishna Shastri did not turn up because he feared the expertise of Dandiji as a grammarian. Even then, the adjudicator Seth Radhakrishna announced in the gathering that Krishna Shastri had been victorious. The Seth knew the weakness of his farcical decision. He wanted to have his decision authenticated by the Pandits of Kashi. He sent Laxman Shastri to Kashi with some money, who paid Rs. 100 for every four signatures in their favour and thus secured the support of Kaka Ram Shastri, Kailash Nath Shastri, Gaur Swami and several others. Pandit Chiranjilal of Agra also signed on getting a payment of Rs. 300. Sethji spent Rs. 3 lakhs for getting the records in his favour.[15]

Dandiji was very unhappy with this farce. He challenged the Pandits of Kashi to discuss the issue with him. Their reply affirmed that Dandiji was undoubtedly correct and they were ready to support him, if paid Rs. 100 for every four signatures. This came as another shock to Dandiji. He felt so disgusted with the malpractices of Kashi Pandits that he stopped interacting with them and discontinued the teaching at his *pāthashālā*. He used to repeat कथं काशी विदुष्मती (*katham kāśī viduṣmatī*)[16] – how can Kashi be a place of the learned where the Pandits who swore in the name of religion were selling knowledge, where the truth was extinct and ordinary books were preferred to the works of the rishis?

In that state of depression, the sūtra कर्तृकर्मणोः कृतिः (*kartṛkarmaṇoḥ kṛtiḥ*) struck Dandiji.[17] Dandiji realised that his opinion was based on the correct explanation of this *sūtra* by the great Pāṇini and this made him very happy.

Dandi Swami now got convinced that the root of all evil was *Kaumudī* and that its writer Bhattoji Dikshit was a fool who had diverted scholarship from the path of the rishis. This declaration became the defining moment in rediscovery of the *ārṣa granthas*. He then concentrated on *Aṣṭādhyāyī* and *Mahābhāshya*. The study of both these books of grammar was prevalent till sixteenth century Vikrama. Bhattoji Dikshit discontinued this tradition and as a result these treatises had become almost extinct.

Dandiji became critical of (i) Bhattoji and other writers who tarnished the tradition of Sanskrit grammar, (ii) the books written by them, and (iii) those who taught and read such books. He called them कुत्सितत्रय or कत्री (*kutsitatraya* or *katrī*).

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Dandiji became so averse to the works of ordinary people that he ordered his disciple Gopi Nath Bhatt to throw the garbage of *anārṣa granthas* like Kaumudī into the river Yamuna. Dandiji also asked him to throw away even his own books, *Vākya-mīmānsā* and *Sūtrārtha prakāsh*. Then onwards, the grammar books written by ordinary people had no place in the *pāthashālā*. He started teaching only *Aṣṭādhyāyī* and *Mahābhāshya* – written by Rishi Pāṇini and Rishi Patañjali respectively. This decision could have resulted in the closure of his *pāthashālā*, because the Mathura region was the stronghold of orthodoxy. But he did not care and initiated a historic change in the study of the Vedic literature.

Swami Virjanand revived the teaching of *Aṣṭādhyāyī* and *Mahābhāshya* at a critical juncture when the Pandits used to say "If one does not know Kaumudī, it is pointless to labour on Patañjali's *Mahābhāshya*. If one knows *Kaumudī*, then too, there is no use of labouring on *Mahābhāshya*."[18] Contrary to it, Dandiji announced: "*Aṣṭādhyāyī* and *Mahābhāshya* are the only two grammar books, and books other than these (*Kaumudī* etc.) are the creation of quacks."[19] This was a rebellion against the orthodox intelligentsia of the time.

Dandi Swami declared that every sentence written in Sanskrit was not authentic and divided the entire Sanskrit literature into *ārṣa* and *anārṣa*. Dandiji devised a simple three-point test to distinguish between the *ārṣa* and *anārṣa* books: (i) the *ārṣa* books begin with *atha* or *aum* whereas *anārṣa* books start with *maṅgalācharaṇ* written in praise of some deity, (ii) the *ārṣa* books propagate the truth, clear one's doubts and aim at the welfare of people, whereas the *anārṣa* books create doubts, project narrow thinking, are full of jealousy and hatred, and usually contradict each other. (iii) the commentaries on the *ārṣa* books are written by the rishis unlike the *anārṣa* books.[20] Such books could not be equated with the *ārṣa granthas*. He had no regard for *Bhāgavata* and other Purāṇas.

A new era dawned in the history of Vedic literature because of the confident teacher. Dandiji's mission became the revival and popularisation of the *ārṣa* literature. Only the time spent on this issue seemed fruitful to him, and he considered the earlier years, a waste. If somebody enquired about his age, he would reckon it from the time he started his research on *ārṣa* literature. He believed that the revival of *ārṣa* literature could lead to all reforms. If the context was idol worship, he felt that once the *ārṣa* literature was revived, it would automatically disappear. If people spoke of incarnation, he would say that the prevalence of *ārṣa* literature would end all such superstitions. For him, this was panacea for all social evils.[21]

Dandiji wanted Maharaja Sawai Ram Singh of Jaipur to convene a conference of scholars (*Sārvabhauma Sabhā*) on grammar. He assured the Raja that he would convince them in an hour's enunciation that only the Vedas and not the Purāṇas, were authentic, and that *Aṣṭādhyāyī* and *Mahābhāshya* were the only *ārṣa granthas* on Vyākaraṇa. The Raja nodded in acceptance but never convened the Sabha.[22] Now Dandiji's only hope lay in his students. The guru was very keen to impart his entire knowledge to someone who had the talent for the task. It had to be a mendicant and celibate like him. All the Pandits of Mathura except five had been the disciples of Dandiji at one time or the other.[23] A few of them were also scholars of repute. However, it was only Swami Dayanand Saraswati, on whom Dandiji could finally pin his hopes. In him, he

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discovered the right successor and in Dandiji, Dayanand found a true teacher. Dandi Swami, a *prajñācakṣu sannyāsī* (blind saint), sculpted Dayanand into a seer.

## THE SWAMI: DAYANAND SARASWATI

Dayanand (1824-1883) sat at the feet of his master at the age of thirty-six for about two and a half years (November 1860 to April 1863) to learn *Aṣṭādhyāyī* and *Mahābhāshya.* He felt,

> just as light spreads from the sun, as water flows from springs - similarly the knowledge of various shāstras flows from Virjanand and astonishes his students. In spite of being blind... he could hold forth on all subjects and was fully absorbed in the pursuit of knowledge because of his extraordinary intrinsic knowledge.[24]

In addition to the two treatises on grammar, Dayanand studied *Nirukta* and *Nighaṇṭu* thoroughly, to understand the Vedas. He also read *Vedānta Darśana* and other treatises. What else did he study with his mentor, cannot be said with certainty. Swamiji's biographer Devendranath Mukhopadhyaya opines that he studied the Upaniṣads, Manusmriti, Brahmasūtra, Patañjali's Yogasūtra and graduated to the Vedas and Vedāṅgas.[25] But there is no evidence available to prove that he studied any Veda Samhitā in its entirety, at his Guru's *pāthashālā.* Rishi Patañjali of *Mahābhāshya* described the protection and propagation of the Veda to be the objective of Vyākaraṇa.[26] Dandiji's conviction was that the knowledge of Vyākaraṇa was essential for the study of the Vedas and that Vyākaraṇa should be studied with examples from Vedas, etc. (वेदादि). He therefore, might not have taught Dayanand any Samhitā specifically, but the teaching of Vyākaraṇa must have been accompanied by examples from the Vedas.

The missionary guru opened up his soul to his hope, Dayanand, and introduced him to the treasures stored within. Swami Dayanand also imbibed much more than what he directly learnt from his teacher. Though complete knowledge of the Vedic literature was not possible in such a short time, he became fully aware of the difference between the *ārṣa* and *anārṣa* literature. He realised that only the four Vedas were authentic. The guru rooted him in Vedic dharma and convinced him that only the *ārṣa* literature could uplift this country, from its downfall after Mahābhārata.[27] Dandiji convinced Dayanand that the falsity of *anārṣa* literature had shrouded the Vedic teachings and the Hindu faith should be re-oriented towards the Vedas. Further, all literature should be judged by Vedic standards and re-defined. Under the influence of his guru, Dayanand rejected idol worship, the Bhāgavata-purāṇa as well as Vaiṣṇavism. He got the following four principles from his master:[28]

(a) Idol worship is against the Vedas,
(b) *Shrāddha* of the deceased is not accordance with the Vedas,
(c) Widow-marriage is not forbidden in the Vedas, and
(d) However fallen one may be, one can be rejuvenated with penance and yajñas.

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While studying at Mathura, Dayanand, thus, formed some definite views about the basic nature of dharma and the various sects prevalent in the country. At the time of his departure from *guru-kuṭiyā,* Dandiji said,

> Son, you know that there is a deluge of *anārṣa* literature. There are various religious sects and malpractices. Vedic dharma is disappearing. The condition of Aryavarta has deteriorated. I need your life for the propagation of *ārṣa* literature. That is the only *guru-dakṣiṇā* I want. If you can give this, then take a pledge that throughout your life you will try to establish the Vedic dharma, free India of contradictory beliefs and dispel the darkness of ignorance created by the *anārṣa granthas.*

Dayanand contemplated upon the words for a while and then bowed his head in reverence saying "Guruji, I will abide by your command throughout my life." It was a momentous decision on the part of Dayanand Saraswati, and a tribute to both the teacher and the taught. Dayanand had left his father's house to realise the true Shiva and to attain *mokṣa.* The guru had now changed the course of his life. After taking a vow to propagate the *ārṣa* literature and to dispel the confusion created by various religious sects, he took leave of his preceptor.

Visionary Guru Virjanand Dandi had fulfilled his dream by putting the responsibility of revival of the Vedic culture on the able shoulders of his beloved disciple Swami Dayanand. Even though he himself was also to spend his remaining years in the propagation of *ārṣa* literature, the guru had handed over the torch of revolution.

Dayanand then shifted to Agra and started preparing himself for the great task ahead. During this period, he would often spend up to eighteen hours at a stretch in the same *āsana* and meditate. The rest of his time was mostly devoted to procuring and studying books. He still needed the guidance of his guru to formulate his own religious principles. Whenever, a doubt arose, he sought clarification from Dandiji either through correspondence or personal discussion. He evaluated the vast Sanskrit literature on the three-point formula propounded by his guru. It took him about a year and nine months to be fully equipped to challenge the religious world. After having prepared himself for the task ordained by the guru, the Swami entered the field.

In a period of nearly four years, a great change had occurred in Swami Dayanand's thinking. The Swami who earlier meditated in solitude was now a public preacher and teacher. He had an unwavering conviction in his newly-formed beliefs and possessed the ability to convince others. He believed in the *varṇāśrama* system of Manusmriti, taught *yoga* and *Aṣṭādhyāyī* as well as other *ārṣa granthas.* He explained the topics of *karmakāṇḍa* and preached on what should or should not be studied. He debated with the people of various faiths. He denounced incarnation, *kaṇṭhī, mālā, tilaka, chhāpa, shaṇkha, chakra* and the like. He decisively called Bhāgavata - *Bharhuā-purāṇa,* referred to temples as *addās* and considered the *mālā* a burden of wood. He denounced the belief that acts like a dip in the Ganga or a fast on *ekādaśī* day leads to

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salvation. He was now extremely antagonistic towards idol worship. Under the influence of an early inclination and disgusted with the suffocating orthodox Vaiṣṇavite atmosphere of Mathura, Dayanand had for some time leaned towards Shaivism. But now the word Shiva meant nothing more to him than one of the countless names of *Īśvara*, and he opposed the idol worship of Shiva. He had faith only in Vedic monotheism, the four Vedas, four Upavedas and six *Vedāṅgas*. He considered Mahābhārata and Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa, books of history. He preached *Sandhyā* and *Gāyatrī*. He was the follower of truth and accepted without hesitation what appeared as truth to him. Before arriving at any conclusion, his touchstone was always the Vedas. His two powerful weapons for understanding the essence of the Vedas were Vyākaraṇa-vidyā that he gained at the feet of the guru and the experience in *Samādhi*.[29]

The formidable forces against Swamiji in the field included (i) the host of Brahmans, learned and otherwise, who had established for themselves a supreme position in the Hindu hierarchy, (ii) the organised forces of Christianity with all their resources and the ever-active propaganda of Islam, (iii) the tendencies which denied God, revelation and religion, (iv) the collapse of prevailing Hindu system of thought, religion and life, in the face of the above-mentioned forces, and (v) the pessimism and inertia which had been engendered by centuries of political and intellectual decline, as well as the apathy and indifference of the Hindus.[30] The opposition was so strong that he was attacked on several occasions, and many attempts were made to poison him, but nothing could deter him from his chosen path. With the good of humanity at heart, he faced the opposition boldly and gracefully. His was a life of great sacrifice. In the early days, he mostly slept on the ground with bricks as his pillow, and sometimes, he would sleep out in the open under a tree. At times, he went without food. Eventually, with this penance and brilliance he began attracting big crowds; succeeded in single-handedly defeating the orthodoxy and in establishing branches of the Arya Samaj to spread his message.

Swami Dayanand toured various places, had *shāstrārthas* (disputations) with the representatives of various sects and religions, criticised the social evils that plagued the society, denounced idol worship and preached the worship of one and the only one formless God. He was the first person to translate the holy Vedas in any Indian language. He wrote Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā and translated the Yajurveda and a part of the Ṛgveda in Hindi. He spoke Sanskrit with the ease of the rishis; his exposition of the Veda mantras was in keeping with their ancient tradition, and radically different from the translations of Indian authors like Sāyaṇa and Mahīdhara as well as the foreign scholars. He wrote tracts explaining the falsity of certain Hindu sects. Among his books, Satyarth Prakash has a special place, as it revolutionised the thinking of the society.

Swamiji was getting the desired success and several Rajas of various princely states became his disciples. He excelled in whatever he had wished for. By now, he had demonstrated unwavering faith in God, complete renunciation, firm determination, commitment to principles, sound knowledge of the Vedas and ability to convince others in *shāstrārthas*. Dandiji's long wait had come to fruition and his hope had been realised in the form of Dayanand.

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Analysing the impact of Dayanand, K.P. Jayaswal, a non-Arya Samajist, records:

> He installed the man in the street into his true position in society, he put him in direct worship of one God... The Sannyāsī Dayanand gave freedom to the soul of the Hindu... and he forged that freedom from inside, this from Hindu literature itself. He did something still greater which his predecessors from the Buddha to Ram Mohan Roy had failed to achieve. He established the falsity of caste from the orthodox national stand point and made the Hindus disbelieve that theory. True Vedic Hinduism, he gave the message, is equality by birth. You become an Arya, that is the noble race of Hindus, by your deeds, not by birth. He opened up the Vedic civilisation even to the non-Hindu.[31]

Swamiji was well on the way to achieving the goals of his mission, when unfortunately, he was poisoned at Jodhpur in September 1883.[32] The treatment given, proved futile. He was shifted first to Mount Abu and then to Ajmer. Upon hearing the sad news of his illness, the Aryas from various places started converging at Ajmer. Among them, was a young scholar of eighteen years, Guru Datta Vidyarthi, who accompanied by Lala Jivan Das, arrived from Lahore on October 28 to have his last darshan. After an introduction by Jivan Das, he touched Swamiji's feet with great reverence and said 'namaste'. Guru Datta served the great Rishi like a son in those two or three days.[33] His condition was deteriorating with every passing moment. Eruptions had appeared all over his body and he could move about only with much difficulty. Even then, his face was calm and radiant with a heavenly brilliance. It was on the fateful evening of October 30 that he asked his followers to stand behind him. Only Guru Datta was singled out to remain in front. The Rishi's intellect had probably located a true successor in him. He affectionately spoke a few words in his ears, then prayed to God and submitted himself to the wish of the Almighty. Guru Datta observed that the Swami had no fear of death, and was instead joyful as he was going to join his Divine father. The charm of Swamiji's character and the magnetic influence of his life turned Guru Datta into a being, loftier and sublime. He left Ajmer, a person, transformed.

## THE DISCIPLE: GURU DATTA VIDYARTHI

Guru Datta (1864-1890), on his return to Lahore after the last darshan of Swami Dayanand, joined, rather led, the Arya Samajists in establishing a D.A.V. College in the sacred memory of the departed soul. He also devoted himself to a deep study of *ārṣa* literature. The more he studied Swami Dayanand, the greater became his admiration for the revolutionary reformer, and the deeper, his faith in dharma. He read Satyarth Prakash no less than eighteen times and declared that with every reading, he found something new in the way of mental and spiritual nourishment. The book, he said, was full of recondite truths.[34] Lala Lajpat Rai mentions that "he (Guru Datta) went through all the works of Professor Max Müller, Nayāi, Mīmānsā, Vaiśeṣika, and Yoga out of Aryan philosophies, *Nirukta* and Swami Dayananda's Bhāshya on Vedas, *Mahābhāshya* by

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Patañjali, Manusmriti, and a host of other books, too numerous to be mentioned."[35] He was preparing himself for the responsibility, he was to shoulder.

The D.A.V. movement had begun consuming Guru Datta's total attention. He set himself actively to the advocacy of the cause and delivered speeches in Punjab and elsewhere, generating a healthy interest among the educated class. His learning, noble bearing, spotless character and childlike simplicity drew large audiences everywhere and his passionate and vigorous appeals, charming and eloquent, moved the people to open their purses in the interest of the proposed institution. At the time of the founding of the school in 1886, it was decided to start the teaching of Hindi, Arithmetic, Sanskrit and English (Urdu optional also) from first, second, third and fourth class respectively. The teaching of *Aṣṭādhyāyī* was to be an integral part of the curriculum. Unlike the government schools, there was no provision for the teaching of Persian. Hindi was chosen as the medium of instruction in the primary and middle classes, and English in the upper classes.[36] This revolutionary scheme bearing the stamp of Guru Datta's genius, was approved by the college committee.

With time, differences grew amongst the leaders of the movement, as to the lines on which the college was to be run. The principle underling this difference concerned the authority of Swamiji. The party that was in favour of vegetarianism maintained that, Swami Dayanand's opinion on the matter was binding on the Arya Samaj, and anyone who held a different opinion could not be or remain a member of the body. The opposing party maintained that although Swami Dayanand had expressed an opinion unfavourable to meat diet and the Samaj had tacitly accepted that position, a member need believe in the Samaj's Ten Principles only, and that the Samaj had no authority to question an individual's right of judgment in private matters not covered strictly by the Ten Principles. This group was agreeable to introducing Sanskrit and *Vedic Shikshā* to a limited extent only, and was not very particular about the teaching of *Aṣṭādhyāyī*. It aimed at putting the college on a firm footing as an affiliated institution of the university.

A five-member sub-committee was constituted to consider the introduction of *Aṣṭādhyāyī* in the school curriculum. Some members were against the teaching *Aṣṭādhyāyī* as they thought it was very likely to drive the students to take up Persian instead of Sanskrit, and if Persian was abolished, then very few, if any, students would care to attend the Dayanand College. Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi disagreed with the suggestion and stated that "It ill becomes an institution, founded in memory of the Great Swami Dayanand, not to heed his voice in educational matters, a voice which he raised after experiences, dearly and sadly bought at the price of his most valuable time and life."[37] Lala Sain Das suggested that an experimental trial be given to the teaching of *Aṣṭādhyāyī* with meaning and simple *udāharaṇa* for a year. It was thus under Guru Datta's pressure that the management had to partly introduce the teaching of *Aṣṭādhyāyī* in the middle classes of the college.[38] Guru Datta's proposal in this regard would have been accepted in totality but for the threat by Lala Lal Chand.[39] The remaining proposals of Panditji were postponed for a later time and to a more suitable occasion.

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Guru Datta Vidyarthi, who had witnessed the departure of Swami Dayanand Saraswati from this world, was so charmed by his personality, philosophy and that fateful event that he had devoted himself entirely to the cause, dear to the departed pious soul. He felt morally committed to the sentiments expressed frequently in his appeals for funds in aid of the institution. For him, it was imperative that the real objectives of the institution should never be lost sight of, and that popularity should not be gained at the cost of principles and by the neglect of classical Sanskrit. According to him, the institution was not opened to produce clerks and babus. This College was to serve as a medium for fulfilling the promise given by Swamiji to Dandiji. Disappointed with the delay-tactics of the management, he started *Aṣṭādhyāyī* and *Mahābhāshya* classes at his residence in May 1889. This movement soon became so popular that the young Arya Samajists like Mahatma Munshiram, Master Durga Prasad, Lala Jivan Das, Master Atmaram and Pandit Rambhaj Dutt were found carrying *Aṣṭādhyāyī* all the time. Now Panditji was working for his two missions: everyone irrespective of age should learn Sanskrit and practise *yoga* to be a true Arya.

Guru Datta was well aware that *updeshaks* (preachers) were required in large numbers for the propagation of Swami's mission. As the D.A.V. management was not doing anything in this direction, he started classes to prepare *updeshaks,* at his residence.[40] Realising the impact of this move, Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Punjab, later resolved to start an Updeshak Vidyalaya.

The importance of literature for any movement cannot be underestimated. Guru Datta Vidyarthi wrote articles right from the age of eighteen. His study was vast; thinking, philosophical; language, forceful; and the arguments, convincing. His genius enriched the Samaj with well-argued and thought-provoking articles. His writings, at times however, did go beyond the comprehension of an ordinary reader.

Keeping in mind the fact that 'language is the outward thought and thought is the inward language', Guru Datta discussed the 'Origin of Thought and Language' in one of his articles. He concluded that "in reality the Veda cannot be a book, it cannot even be articulate speech. The true Veda is rather a matter of feeling and knowing. And that feeling and that knowledge, the Samhitās give us in a very tangible form."[41]

He further discussed the mythological, the antiquarian or the historical and the contemporarian methods of interpretation of the Vedas. These methods, he demonstrated, prove insufficient and fail in contrast to the philosophical character of the Vedas. Quoting *Mahābhāshya,* he declared the Vedic words to be *yaugic* and not *rurhī.*[42] This is the key to the understanding of the terminology of the Vedas.[43] The Europeans erred here and thus could not comprehend the true meaning of the Vedic mantras. Pandit Guru Datta successfully exposed the hollowness of their Vedic scholarship with his translation of certain mantras of the Ṛgveda that had been misinterpreted earlier by Max Müller and other European authors.[44]

Thereafter, Pandit Guru Datta unfolded the wisdom hidden in a few mantras of the Ṛgveda. In his Text Nos. I, II and III, he has dealt with the atmosphere, the composition of water and *Gṛhastha* respectively[45] to probably demonstrate that the Vedas contain the seeds of all true knowledge as asserted by Swami Dayanand in the third principle of the Arya Samaj. None before him could deduce scientific truth from the

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Vedas as unambiguously as he could in his Text No. II. He, a student of Chemistry, established that this mantra presented the chemical composition of water as a derivative of hydrogen and oxygen. The commentary is a masterpiece, possible only because of his understanding of science coupled with the mastery over Sanskrit Vyākaraṇa.

In those days, the European authors were running down the Vedas, the Upaniṣads and other works by the rishis. Gough remarked that "the Upanishads are the mental produce of an unprogressive portion of mankind... the thoughts of thinkers of a lower race, of a people of stationary culture, whose intellectual growth stands almost apart from the general movement of human intelligence." He further says that "in treating of Indian philosophy a writer has to deal with thoughts of lower order than the thoughts of the every-day life." Max Müller did not lag behind in denigrating the scriptures. To him, the Upaniṣads "consist in the extraordinary number of passages which seem to us utterly meaningless and irrational or at all events so far-fetched that we can hardly believe that the same authors who can express the deepest thoughts on religion and philosophy... could have uttered in the same breath such utter rubbish."[46] To Lord Macaulay, a single shelf of good European Library was worth all the literature of India.[47] Guru Datta Vidyarthi's exposition of Īśopaniṣad, Māṇḍūkyopaniṣad and translation of the mantras of Muṇḍkopaniṣad[48] is sufficient to convince a reader about the scholarship of Panditji in contrast to the ignorance of the Westerns about the serious contents of these scriptures. His language is choice, the reasoning elevating and the exposition quite absorbing and fascinating. Although he did not have the advantage of seeing Swami Dayanand's commentary on 40th chapter of the Yajurveda, his original interpretation is in no way dichotomous with Rishi's Bhāshya. The styles are dissimilar, yet the essence remains the same.

Asserting that religion has been grossly misconceived, Panditji observes,

> Artificial prayers, consisting of set phrases, uttered almost unconsciously, or at the best, in a state of semi consciousness, by unfeeling hearts, who, in their lives and conduct have betrayed inhuman vices, cruelty, uncontrollable passions, strong antipathies and inexcusable weaknesses; forced ceremonials, adopted through imitation, habit, fashion, custom, or fear of society; costly, useless, energy-wasting and time-consuming rituals; blood iniquities, that priests and leaders of sects have practiced, establishing inequalities of men in the sight of Heaven; these and similar other absurdities have usurped the title of religion, and have inundated the world with an uncontrollable flood of misery, vice, crime, war and bloodshed.[49]

The scriptures opened the true meaning of religion to Guru Datta and he recorded in his diary on September 5, 1888, "What a blessing is religion! But one must understand the general system of providence to feel the happiness that religion brings."[50] His essays on Evidence of the Human Spirit, The Realities of Inner Life, Pecuniomania etc.,[51] are invaluable to those in search of a higher meaning of life.

Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi was fighting on various fronts all by himself. Vedic Dharma was under attack by the Christian missionaries. He rebutted their criticism of

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Swami's Vedabhāshya, misinterpretation of Niyoga and the alleged idolatry in the Vedas.[52] Nearer home, the ideological differences between the Brahmos and the Arya Samaj were personalised by Shiv Narayan Agnihotri, the founder of Dev-dharma in several tracts such as *Pandit Dayananda Saraswati ke Veda Bhāshya par Review, Dayanandi Kalyugi Mazhab* etc. Guru Datta wrote a few articles about Brahmo Samaj and its ideology.[53] The impact was clear in the numbers. In 1891, the membership of Arya Samaj, Brahmo Samaj and Dev-dharma was 14030, 128 and 12 respectively.[54] The growing impact of Darwinism on those who have no study of the *ārṣa granthas* did not miss his notice and he wrote articles entitled 'Darwin and his Theory' as well as 'Man's Progress Down-wards.'[55]

In fact, this *mānasputra* (the spiritual son or successor) of Swami Dayanand fought on all fronts all alone without caring for the human limitations. He was simultaneously, studying the *ārṣa granthas*, designing courses of study for the D.A.V. College, writing articles, teaching *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, running upadeshak classes, delivering lectures, practising *yoga* and working for the monthly *Vedic Magazine*. He was a multi-faceted crusader for his guru's mission. He had already merged his identity with that of his preceptor. He neither had the inclination nor the time for any personal goals. This was probably the reason for his being irregular with everything. The burden proved too demanding, and the result was tragic. The Arya Samaj and intellectual world lost him forever in the prime of his youth when he was just twenty-six.

Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi was popular as *devatā* in his circle. So pious was his life! He ranked amongst the best minds of his time. History records that his preceptor "Dayanand was not only the greatest Indian of the 19th century. Dayanand not only continued the lineage of Visvāmitra, Nārada and Shankara, he has a high place amongst the modern liberators of mankind."[56] He was the only Rishi of his time. And the great guru Dandiji, a man of rare commitment, determination and scholarship was like the Himalaya in the world of knowledge. Most pandits, āchāryas, grammarians, yogis, ascetics, parsons, maulavis, religious heads, believers, non-believers and sceptics were wonderstruck and dumb-founded when confronted with the sheer genius of Dayanand, but he submitted his intellect, scholarship and thinking to the talent, intellect, scholarship, thought and vision of Guru Virjanand Dandi. How exceptional and extra-ordinary must have been that Dandi Sadhu!

Just as Greece produced Socrates, Plato and Aristotle in the field of philosophy, we have in India, the Guru (Virjanand Dandi), the Swami (Dayanand) and the Disciple (Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi). All three had the same motive and were relentless crusaders of the same cause. They were the saviours of the *ārṣa* tradition, and luminaries in the field of reform and scholarly work.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Yudhisthira Mimamsaka, 1969, Preface to *Virjanand Prakash*, Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Sonepat,
2. Vag Bhatta, *Brihatsamhita*, chapter 1.
3. Yudhisthira Mimamsaka, 1984, *Sanskrita Vyākaraṇa Shāstra kā Itihāsa*, part I, Bahalgarh, p. 208.

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4. *Gyānasankalini Tantra*, shloka 7.
5. *Mahānirwāna Tantra*, chapter 6, shloka 196.
6. Dr. Sampurnānand did not accept the Purāṇas to be authored by Vyāsa. In his opinion, "It is in the Purāṇas only that the deities have been taken lightly and denigrated.... while reading one gets exasperated.... what a deplorable composition.... the inconsistency in the Purāṇas is symptomatic of the fact that they were neither composed at one time nor are the work of a single individual.... possibly Vyāsadev may have told his students about ancient history but crediting him with the authorship of currently available Purāṇas is like making fun of him.... it is not possible for me to reduce such a venerated individual to light hearted mockery. (*Brāhmaṇa Sāvadhāna*, 2011, Aryan Life Co., Kolkata, pp. 26, 31, 45).
7. *Srīmadbhāgavata-purāṇa*, skandha x, chapter 22, shlokas 16-22; chapter 33, shlokas 13, 18, 30, 32.
8. Pandit Rajender, 1966, *Sanātan Dharma*, Satya Prakashan, Vrindavan Marg, Mathura, pp. 159-176; the various shlokas from Bhāgavata-purāṇa, Brahmavaivarta-purāṇa, Bhavisya-purāṇa, Padma-purāṇa, Shiva-purāṇa etc. quoted therein.
9. *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*, skandha xi, chapter 5, shlokas 19, 20, 22, 25, 28, 29.
10. *Yajurveda*, 40.8.
11. *Padma-purāṇa*, uttar khaṇḍa, 103.
12. *Mārkaṇḍeya-purāṇa*, chapter 81.
13. *Bhavisya-purāṇa*, pratisargaparva khaṇḍa 1, chapter 5, shloka 37; रविवारे च सण्डे च फाल्गुने चैव फरवरी। षष्टिश्च सिक्स्टी ज्ञेया तदुदाहरमीदृशम्।।
14. *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 4.1.4 in *Siddhānta-Kaumudī* 455. - The debate was to decide the compound in अजाद्युक्तिः (*ajādyuktiḥ*) used in line – अजाद्युक्तिर्ङीषो ङीपश्च बाधनाय (*ajādyuktirṅīṣo ṅīpaśca bādhanāya*) – written on the *sūtra* अजाद्यतष्टाप् (*ajādyatasṭāp*).
15. Later on astrologer Lakshman Shastri's nephew Pandit Mulchandra told this to Bhimsen Shastri in October 1946, *Virjanand Prakash*, 1992, Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Amritsar, p. 70.
16. Dandiji sarcastically wrote eight stanzas for the Pandits of Kashi, which ended thus: कथं काशी विदुष्मती (*katham kāśī viduṣmatī*, How is Kashi, the city of learned?). Dayanand had learnt this Shlokasṭaka by heart.
17. *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, 2.3.65. कर्तृकर्मणोः कृतिः By virtue of this aphorism the अजादि *(ajādi)* word, in relation to उक्ति (*ukti*) – a *kṛdanta*, will be put in sixth case. In this way it will be explained – अजादीनां कर्मीभूतानामुक्तिः *ajādīnām karmībhūtānāmuktiḥ* – and by virtue of the *vartikā* – कृद्योगा च षष्ठी समस्यते – *kṛdyogā ca ṣaṣṭhī samasyate* (on *Aṣṭādhyāyī* – 2.2.8) it will be put in *ṣaṣṭhī-tatpuruṣa* compound. In case of explanation as – अजादिषु उक्तिः - *ajādiṣu uktiḥ* – no compound is possible in relation to – समर्थः पदविधिः - *samarthaḥ padavidhiḥ* – because it is not compatible to compound.
18. कौमुदी यदि नायाति वृथा भाष्ये परिश्रमः। कौमुदी यदि ह्यायाति वृथा भाष्ये परिश्रमः।।
19. अष्टाध्यायीमहाभाष्ये द्वे व्याकरणपुस्तके। ततोऽन्यत् पुस्तकं यत्तु तत्सर्वं धूर्तचेष्टितम्।।
20. Ram Prakash, Dr., 2012, *Guru Virjanand Dandi (Life and Philosophy)*, Satyarth Prakashan, Kurukshetra.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 86.
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 87-89.
23. Mukundadev, 2003, *Dandiji ki Jivani*, (ed. Ram Prakash, Dr.), Satyarth Prakashan, Kurukshetra, p. 93.
24. Devendranath Mukhopadhyaya, 1932, *Virjanand Carita* (Hindi), Govindram Hasanand, Delhi, pp. 186-187.
25. Devendranath Mukhopadhyaya, 1932, *Dayananda Carita*, Govindram Hasanand, Delhi, p. 136.
26. रक्षार्थं वेदानामध्येयं व्याकरणम्।। (महाभाष्य–पस्पशाह्निक व्याकरण–प्रयोजन–प्रसंग में)

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27. K.W. Jones, 1976, *Arya Dharm*, Manohar publications, New Delhi, p. 32.
28. Ram Prakash, Dr., *op.cit.*, p. 103.
29. *Ibid.*, pp. 151-152.
30. Lalpat Rai Lala, 1989, *The Arya Samaj*, Renaissance Publishing House, Delhi, pp. 249-250.
31. Harbilas Sarda, 1933, *Dayanand Commemoration Volume*, Vedic Yantralaya, Ajmer, p. 163.
32. Max Müller wrote in 1884, "Swami Dayanand was a reformer and was in consequence exposed to much obloquy and persecution during his life time, so much so that it was hinted in papers that his death was due to poison administered by his enemies (*Biographical Essays*, p. 170)." A Christian Professor J.C. Oman mentioned, "The Vedic reformer died at Ajmer on the October 30, 1883, at the age of fifty nine, having, according to the accounts of his followers, been poisoned with arsenic by some of the enemies whom religious reform has raised up against him (*Indian Life: Religious and Social*, p. 112)." The above account is in keeping with the report in *The Regenerator of Aryavarta*, Vol. 1, No. 45, November 5, 1883.
33. Lajpat Rai Lala, 2012, *Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi: Life and Work* (Ed., Ram Prakash, Dr.), Satyarth Prakashan, Kurukshetra, p. 36, note 3.
34. Ram Prakash, Dr. (ed.), 2013, *Works of Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi*, Ghaziabad, p. xxxi.
35. Lajpat Rai Lala, *Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi: Life and Work*, (ed. Ram Prakash, Dr.), p. 79.
36. *Arya Partika*, May 4, 1886, pp. 3-4, Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi played a crucial role in deciding the scheme of studies.
37. Lajpat Rai Lala, *Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi: Life and Work*, (ed. Ram Prakash, Dr.), pp. 144-151.
38. Ram Prakash, Dr., 2012, *Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi* (Hindi), Satyarth Prakashan, Kurukshetra, p. 129; Lalpat Rai,1914, *Jivan Charitra Pandit Guru Dattaji Vidyarthi (Urdu), Memoirs of Lala Kedarnath*, Pindidas, Pustak Bhandar, Lahore.
39. Lajpat Rai Lala, *Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi: Life and Work*, (ed., Ram Prakash, Dr.), pp. 144-151.
40. Ram Prakash, Dr., *Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi*, (Hindi), pp. 156-159.
41. Ram Prakash, Dr., *Works of Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi*, p. 53.
42. For definition of *yaugika* and *rurhī* words, see Guru Datta Vidyarthi, *The Terminology of the Vedas and the Europeans Scholars*, chapter 21, pp. 321-338.
43. Ram Prakash, Dr., ed., *Works of Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi*, pp. 1-12.
44. *Ibid.*, pp. 13-50.
45. *Ibid.*, pp. 54-67.
46. *Ibid.*, p. 68
47. Lord T.B. Macaulay's Minute on Education, February 2, 1835 (available on Internet).
48. Ram Prakash, Dr. (ed.), *Works of Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi*, pp. 69-124
49. *Ibid.*, p. 72.
50. Ram Prakash, Dr., *Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi*, (Hindi), p. 100.
51. Ram Prakash, Dr. (ed.), *Works of Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi*, pp. 126-177.
52. *Ibid.*, pp. 211-215, 262-276.
53. *Ibid.*, pp. 195-209.
54. Census, Punjab Report, 1891, p. 172.
55. Ram Prakash, Dr. (ed.), *Works of Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi*, pp. 183-193.
56. Harbilas Sarda, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

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# CHAPTER 10

# Arya Samaj: A Tradition of Scholarship

*Prachetas*

The profound and vast scholarly work of Swami Dayanand mark a turning point in the study of *ārṣa* canonical literature, without which the essence of Vedic wisdom and *dharma* cannot be grasped. His work has been carried forward by a galaxy of Arya Samajist scholars, who have painstakingly researched and written on various scriptures and topics. This article attempts to provide the researcher and the lay reader alike, with an overview of the some of the most important works by Arya Samajist scholars with special reference to the following topics:

1. The Vedas and Vedic commentaries (including the literature concerning Vedic *Samhitās, Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas* and *Upaniṣads*).
2. The *Vedāṅgas* (*Śikṣā, Kalpa, Nirukta, Jyotiṣa, Chanda* and *Vyākaraṇa*).
3. The *Upāṅgas* (the literature concerning the six *Vedic Darśanas*).
4. The biographies (of Arya Samaj leaders and scholars).
5. The works written in support of Vedic Principles and in refutation of Non-Vedic sects (*Khaṇḍana-Maṇḍana*).

Swami Dayanand has himself contributed extensively in all the above fields of knowledge with proper directions and clarifications of the approved principles.[1]

## VEDAS AND VEDIC COMMENTARIES

### *Veda-Samhitās*

The Vedas are the oldest recorded books of world literature.[2] The *Samhitās* were committed to memory in the guru-disciple tradition. The Vedas are therefore also known as *Śruti*. Countless people, across generations and centuries have thus helped in preserving the Vedas. Max Müller records: "If every MS. (manuscript) of the Ṛg-veda

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were lost, we should be able to recover the whole of it – from the memory of the *Śrotrīyās* of India."[3]

Swami Dayanand relied upon the four Vedas printed in Europe. The extracts of the Atharvaveda cited by him are on the basis of the edition of Roth and Whitney. There were two or three manuscripts of the Atharvaveda available in the collection of Swamiji.

The four *Samhitās* were first published as a set by Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi from Virjanand Yantralaya, Lahore. In the editions of Ṛgveda, Sāmaveda and Yajurveda published in 1889, 1889 and 1890 respectively, *ṛṣi, devatā* and *chanda* were printed in red ink and the mantras in black ink. Guru Datta has mentioned *ṛṣi, devatā* and *chanda* as per the *Vedabhāshya* of Dayanand. In that first edition of Sāmaveda Samhitā, *ṛṣi, devatā* and *chanda* are mentioned but not the *ṣḍjādi svaras.* The Atharvaveda Samhitā edited by him and published in 1904 does not mention *ṛṣi, devatā* and *chanda* etc. of the mantras/sūktas.

The *Samhitās* published by Vedic Yantralaya, Ajmer for the first time in Samvat 1954-58 Vikrami followed the *Samhitās* edited by Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi. Yudhisthira Mimamsaka opines that the basis of the first five editions of the Atharvaveda printed from Ajmer could have been either the edition of Pandit Guru Datta or the Sāyana-*bhāshya* of the Atharvaveda as published by Pandurang. Some portions of the editions printed from Ajmer do not tally with the edition of Roth and Whitney. The Atharva Samhitā published from Ajmer in 1944 mentions *ṛṣi, devatā* and *chanda* and also contains the special text of the edition of Roth and Whitney. This edition was edited by Pandit Yudhishthira Mimamsaka, and he made certain corrections in *ṛṣis, devatās* and *chandas* in Sāmaveda printed from Ajmer in Samvat 2004.[3]

The personal collection of Swami Dayanand, had Max Müller's edition of Sāyaṇa-bhāshya of Ṛgveda published in 1856. Mathuradas Lavajee presented him a copy of the Atharvaveda published in the USA. This book is now available in the collection of Paropkarini Sabha, Ajmer. Swamiji did not get any basic Samhitā published in his lifetime. Vedic Yantralaya printed the four Vedic *Samhitās* after the demise of Swamiji. The texts of Ṛg-Yajush were based on the editions published by Guru Datta. The *ṛṣis, devatās* and *chandas* etc. of both the editions, tally.

Duly labeled with *Padapāṭha* signs Ṛgveda Samhitā of Śāmkhyāyan branch (1-4 parts) edited by Dr. Amaldhari Singh and Prof. Roop Kishore was published from Sandipani Veda Vidya Pratishthan, Ujjain in 2012-13.

The word indices of the four Vedas (in an alphabetical order) edited by Swami Vishveshvaranand and Swami Nityanand were printed in 1907-08. Vedic Yantralaya, Ajmer published the mantra-indices of the four Vedas in alphabetical order in 1901. Shripad Damodar Satvalekar published the correct editions of the four Vedas from Swadhyaya Mandal Pardi using the expertise of Vedic scholars. Satvalekar also published Taittirīya, Maitrāyaṇi and Kāṭhaka Samhitās of Kṛṣṇa Yajurveda and Kaṇva-Samhitā of Śukla Yajurveda. Besides Vedic Yantralaya, Ajmer, the Vedic Samhitās have also been published by Haryana Sahitya Sansthan, Gurukul Jhajjar, Gurukul Gautam Nagar, Delhi, Govindram Hasanand, Delhi and Delhi Sanskrit Academy. Swami Jagdishwaranand has edited the four Vedic Samhitās published by Shri Ghurmal

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Prahladkumar Arya Dharmarth Trust, Hindon City (Rajasthan). The contribution of Virjanand Daivkarni in editing the four Samhitās recently is praiseworthy. His publication of *Sāmagāna* in 2004 on the basis of a manuscript dating back to 1474 is also commendable. Paropkarini Sabha, Ajmer re-printed the Pada-Samhitā of the Sāmaveda in 1982, which too is a contribution by Virjanand Daivkarni. In 1937, Ghasiram Prakashan Vibhag of Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Uttar Pradesh published the mantras of Paippalāda Samhitā of the Atharvaveda with translation which are not available in the Shaunaka Samhitā of Ṛgveda. Ramdutt Shukla and Vasudev Sharan Agrawal compiled and translated this work. The edition of the Yajurveda Samhitā edited by Yudhishthira Mimamsaka in 1960 and that of Mādhyandina Padapāṭha by him in 1971 are recognised as the ideal editions in Yajurvedic literature. Mimamsaka edited this padapāṭha, using a manuscript of 1414 and other available printed editions.

Dr. Raghuvira[5] published the Kapiṣṭhala Kaṭha Samhitā of the Kṛṣṇa Yajurveda from Lahore in 1932. He also published the Paippalāda Samhitā of the Atharvaveda. Lakshman Sarup edited the Bhāshya of the Ṛgveda by Venkaṭ-Mādhava which was published in four parts by Motilal Banarasidas. Parts I to III were issued from Lahore in the years 1939, 1940 and 1943, respectively and part IV, from Varanasi in 1955. These four parts cover the Bhāshya up to the end of the 7th mandal. The Skanda Bhāshya of the Ṛgveda edited by Vishvabandhu was published by Vishveshvranand Vedic Shodh Sansthan, Hoshiarpur. This includes the compilation and editing of the Veda Bhāshyas by Skanda, Udgitha, Mudgala, Venkaṭ-Mādhava etc. *Venkaṭamādhavīyā Ṛgvedānukramaṇī* with Hindi translation by Vijaypal was published in 1979 by Ramlal Kapoor Trust.

Arsh Sahitya Prachar Trust, Delhi published '*Caturveda Mantrānukrama Sūcī*' in 1983. The editor Acharya Arjundev Varni arranged all the mantras in alphabetical order with their references, embodying the references to explanatory texts such as Nirukta, Āraṇyaka, Brāhmaṇas like Ārṣeya, Samhitās like Kaṇva and all the works of Swami Dayanand. V.V.R.I., Hoshiarpur published in 15 volumes, the Magnumopus – A Vedic Word Concordance – which embodies alphabetised and grammatically analysed word entries under their head words – nominal or verbal roots - with all references of exact occurrence. This concordance has covered about 500 prominent Vedic texts and therefore it is considered an invaluable resource for advanced Vedic research. Apart from this gigantic work, the V.V.R.I. has also published grammatical word index of the four Vedas, Taittirīya Samhitā, and prominent Upaniṣads.

## COMMENTARIES ON THE VEDAS

Yajurvedabhāshya of Dayanand was published in 117 issues in the period from Samvat 1934 to 1936. His Ṛgvedabhāshya, available up to 7.61.2, has been published by Paropkarini Sabha in nine parts. Mahāmahopādhyāya Aryamuni took the work further by doing the Bhāshya from 7.61.3 till the end of the 9th mandal in Sanskrit and Hindi. It was published between 1918 and 1923 in 6 parts from Kashi through different presses. Pandit Shiv Shankar Sharma Kavyatirth wrote *Ṛgvedabhāshya* from 9.1 to 9.29 in Sanskrit and Hindi which was published in 1923. Swami Brahma Muni Parivrajak completed the Bhāshya of 10th mandal in two parts and it was published is 1974 and 1988 respectively

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by Paropkarini Sabha, Ajmer. The summary of Dayanand Bhāshya on Yajurveda was written by Puran Chandra Sharma under the title *Yajurvedabhāshābhāshya* which was published in 1904.

Pandit Chamupati translated the first ten chapters of Yajurveda in English. Swami Bhumanand translated Yajurveda in English but the manuscript was lost during the partition India. Swami Dharmanand Saraswati (Dharmadeva Vidyamartand) translated the Ṛgveda-bhāshya of Swami Dayanand by the name "The Ṛgveda: An English Translation of Swami Dayanand", which was published by Sarvadeshik Sabha, New Delhi in 1974. An Urdu translation of the Yajurveda was done by Pandit Ashuram, and was published in 1984. M.R. Jambhunathan rendered the translation of the Yajurveda in Tamil while Anna Keshavarya Shastri and P.S. Acharya translated Dayanand Bhāshya in Telugu. The translation of *Yajurvedabhāshābhāshya* in Gurumukhi script was rendered by Sardar Amar Singh and was published in two volumes by Vrindavan Shodh Sansthan in 1907. Dayal Muni Arya of Tankara translated the four Vedas in Gujarati.

Shripad Damodar Satvalekar prepared *Subodh-Bhāshyas* of the four Vedas, published by Swadhyaya Mandal, Pardi, Aundh. Satvalekar also composed *Daivata-Samhitā* and *Ārṣa-Samhitā* which are compilations of mantras according to their *devatās* and *ṛṣis* separately. Bengali and Tamil translations of first mandal of Ṛgveda have been done by Deenbandhu Vedashastri and M.R. Jambhunathan respectively. One hundred selected mantras of the Ṛgveda have been translated in Oriya and Tamil by Priyabrata Das and Keshvarya Shastri respectively. *Sadāqata Ṛgveda* in Urdu is a prominent and analytical work by Pandit Lekhram.

Pandit Jaidev Vidyalankar rendered *Ṛgvedabhāshya* (in seven volumes), *Yajurvedabhāshya* (in two parts), *Sāmavedabhāshya* (in one part) and *Atharvavedabhāshya* (in four parts) in Hindi. In *Atharvavedabhāshya,* the author has added a 94-page preface and has answered questions like the date of its origin, alleged description of magic such as *Jādū-ṭonā, māraṇa, mohana, uccāṭana* etc. Prof. Vishvanath Vidyalankar has intensively refined and polished this volume of Atharvaveda. The result of Jaidev's hard work of eleven years from 1925 to 1936, this Bhāshya of the Vedas in Hindi is the first ever translation of all the four Vedas in any Indian language.

The Bhāshya of the four Vedas in Hindi by Harisharan was published by Bhagvati Prakashan, New Delhi in eleven volumes. Vaidyanath Shastri prepared a Hindi Bhāshya of the 10th mandal of the Ṛgveda and it was published by Sarvadeshik Sabha, New Delhi. Another Bhāshya of the 10th mandal written by Bihari Lal Shastri was published by Jangyan Prakashan, Delhi. *Sāmavedabhāshya* by Tulsiram Swami in Sanskrit and Hindi was published in 2 parts by Swami Press, Meerut. This Bhāshya was originally published in the form of a monthly magazine, whose first issue was released in June 1898.

Other Bhāshyas on the Sāmaveda are as the following:

*Sāmavedabhāshya* by Ramavatar Sharma and Vaidyanath Shastri; the easily understandable *Sāmavedabhāshya* by Harischandra Vidyalankar; Sāmaveda Ādhyātmika Muni Bhāshya by Swami Brahmanand Parivrajak in two volumes, Hindi translation by Acharya Virendra Shastri; English translation of Sāmaveda by Lala Devi Chand; Hindi

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translation by Acharya Vidyanidhi Shastri published from Karnal in 1977; *Ādhyātmika Bhāshya* of Sāmaveda by Prof. Vishvanath Vidyalankar; *Sāmavedabhāshya* by Swami Jagadishwaranand; and *Sāmavedabhāshya* by Dr. Ramnath Vedalankar. Two works of Pandit Dharmadeva Vidyamartand are partial translations of the Sāmaveda – 'Some Psalms of the Sām Samhitā', and 'Hymns of Sāmaveda'. 'Sāma Sangitā' (*Sāmavedādi-sangitā Pratisanskāra*) is an important work by Tara Shankar Rakesh.

*Atharvabhāshya* by Pandit Kshemkaran Das Trivedi was initiated in 1912 and was completed in 1921. Trivedi also prepared an alphabetical index of Atharvaveda which was printed in 1921. The Hindi part of his Bhāshya, without notes, was re-published by Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Delhi. After a long gap, Dr. Prajñā Devi edited the Bhāshya by Trivediji up to four *kāṇḍas* and got it published in Sanskrit and Hindi. Swami Satya Prakash suggested some improvements in Trivediji's Bhāshya. Trivediji got these suggestions published in 1921 under the title- '*Atharvaveda-Bhāshye-Pariśiṣṭam*'. *Atharvavedabhāshya* by Prof. Vishvanath was published by Ramlal Kapoor Trust. Pandit Buddhdev Vidyalankar wrote *Atharvavedabhāshya* up to first four *kāṇḍas* which was published in continuity in Arya Monthly, Lahore. He wrote the explanation of the 15th *kāṇḍa* of the Atharvaveda under the caption '*Vedic Dampatya Sūkta*'. Swami Brahma Muni also prepared a Bhāshya on the first three *kāṇḍas* of the Atharvaveda.

Many questions have been raised on the Atharvaveda, which have been answered by various scholars. Some prominent works related to this are - *Atharvaveda : Samasyā aur Samādhān* (ed. Dharmvir); *Brahmaveda hai Atharvveda 'Jādū ṭone kā Veda nahīṁ'* (Surya Devi); *Atharvaveda Pariśīlana* (Somdev Shastri); *Atharvavedīya Cikitsāśāstra, Atharvavedīya Mantra Vidyā* (Brahma Muni Parivrajak); *Atharvavediya Pañcapaṭalikā* (Bhagavaddatta); *Atharvaveda-Bhāshyam Prathamaṁ Kāṇḍam-Prathamaṁ Sūktam* (Acharya Vishvabandhu); *Atharvaṇika Rājanīti* (Bharat Bhushan Vedalankar); *Kyā Atharvaveda mein Jādū Ṭonā hai?* (Raghuvir Vedalankar); *Kyā Atharvaveda mein Jādū Ṭonā hai?* (Virjanand Daivkarni) and *Atharvavedīya Vṛhatsarvānukramaṇikā (Bhūmikā tathā sūciyon sahit)* (Ram Gopal Shastri). *Atharvaveda kā Sānskṛtika Adhyayana* (Kapil Dev Dwivedi); *Atharvavedīya Pṛthvi sūkta kī Vyākhyā* (Swami Vedanand Tirth); *Vaidic Mātṛbhumi Vandanā* (Bhawani Lal Bhartiya) and *Veda ka Rāṣṭrīya Geet* (Acharya Priyavrat) are worthy of mention.

Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi was the first Arya Samajist scholar to write on the Terminology of the Vedas and allied subjects in English. An English translation of the four Vedas was done by Swami Satya Parkash Saraswati in 24 volumes. He was assisted by Dr. Satyakam Vidyalankar and later by Udaya Vir Viraj in the translation of the Atharvaveda. This is free of errors like the projection of human history, animal-sacrifice and vulgarity etc. as Swami Satya Prakash, following Swami Dayanand opines that no Vedic word is traditionally fixed (*rurha*), and each word needs etymology. Swami Satya Prakash has quoted several etymologies by Yāska and Dayanand in the footnotes of his translation. Prof. Tulsi Ram completed the logical English Bhāshya of the four Vedas, in 2013. It has been published by Arsh Sahitya Prachar Trust, Delhi.

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## BRĀHMAṆA – ĀRAṆYAKA

There have been some important translations of the Brāhmaṇas of the four Vedas. Among them is Hindi-Bhāshya on *Ṛgvedīya Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* by Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya, published by Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Prayag in 1950. Acharya Virendra Muni did a Hindi translation, which was published along with its preface in 1983 from Lucknow. Acharya Agnivrat Naiṣṭhika presented a scientific Bhāshya of selected portions of *Aaitareya Brāhmaṇa* by the name – *Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa Vijñānām.*[6] Naiṣṭhika also contributed another work by the title – *Veda-Vijñāna-Bhāshya-Maṇḍanam* in which proofs of *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* have been generously used. The books – *Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa-Paryālocana, Aitareya-Āraṇyaka-Paryālocana, Kauṣītaki-Brāhmaṇa-Paryālocana* and *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa Paryālocana* by Mangal Dev Shastri are research-oriented. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, related to Yajurveda, has been the subject of greater research than the other Brāhmaṇas. Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya wrote *Ratnadīpikā,* a Hindi explanation on complete Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa which was published in three volumes between 1968 and 1970. It enjoys great importance due to its 727-page long preface by Satya Prakash, the eldest son of Upadhyayaji. Swami Samarpananand wrote the Bhāshya on the first five chapters of Śatapatha. He also contributed a long preface, published under the title - *Śatapatha mein ek Patha.* Virendra Muni Shastri also produced an easy translation of first four *kāṇḍas* of *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.* Dr. Vedpal Sunith has produced the following three works:

1. *Śatapatha ke Daśa Patha* (part 1 and 2), published in 1991 and 1992.
2. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa aur Gau,* published in 1990.
3. *Śatapatha Subhāṣita,* published in 1995.

Vishvanath Vidyalankar wrote *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇastha Agnicayana-Samīkṣā,* a work related to rituals which was published by Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Bahalgarh (now Revali), Sonipat in 1985. Two erudite women scholars of Arya Samaj have conducted Doctoral research on topics related to Śatapatha – Dr. Urmila Devi Sharma on *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa: Ek Sānskṛtika Adhyayana*[7] and Dr. Savitri Devi Sharma on *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa ke Pratīka*'.[8]

Acharya Virendra Muni Shastri edited and translated in Hindi the *Sāmavanśa Brāhmaṇa, Sāmadevatādhyāya-Brāhmaṇa* and *Sāmasanhitopaniṣad,* all related to the Sāmaveda, which were published from Lucknow in 1989.

Only one Brāhmaṇa related to the Atharvaveda, ia available, i.e. *Gopatha Brāhmaṇa.* Its translation in Sanskrit and Hindi by Kshemakaran Das Trivedi was published in 1924. Acharya Vijaypal edited the text of *Gopatha Brāhmaṇa* published by Ramlal Kapoor Trust, in 1980. Dr. Virendra Alankar composed *Gopatha Brāhmaṇa Nirvacanam* which was published by New Bhāratīya Book Corp., New Delhi in 2006. *Jaiminīya Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa* was edited by Ramdev and published from Lahore in 1921. *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* was edited by Dr. Raghuvira and Lokesh Chandra which was published in 1954. Acharya Satyapriya compiled and translated in easy Hindi, some important portions of the Brāhmaṇas, which were published in 2004 as *Brāhmaṇa*

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*Granthon kī Upayogitā.* Acharya Vishvabandhu compiled *Brāhmaṇai Citations* which was published by VVRI, Hoshiarpur in 1966.

## UPANIṢADS

There are numerous works on Upaniṣadic lilerature written by Arya Samajist scholars.

Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi wrote an extensive commentary in English on *Īśāvāsyopaniṣad* and *Māṇḍūkyopaniṣad* and also translated *Muṇḍakopaniṣad.* The English and Hindi translation of *Vājsaneyopaniṣad* was done by Atmaram Amritsari. Bhimsen Sharma, a disciple of Swami Dayanand, wrote Sanskrit and Hindi expositions of nine Upaniṣads, i.e. *Īśa, Kena, Kaṭha, Praśna, Muṇḍaka, Māṇḍūkya, Aitareya, Taittirīya* and *Śvetāśvatara.* Tulsiram Swami's commentary on *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad* in Sanskrit and Hindi was published in 1897. Shiv Shankar Sharma Kavyatirth wrote commentaries on *Chāndogya* and *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣads* which were published in 1911. Aryamuni, in his commentaries on Upaniṣads, has successfully negated the *advaitavāda* of Shankar. His work on the ten principal Upaniṣads, excluding *Śvetāśvatara,* was published under the title *Upaniṣadāryyabhāsya,* and commands great respect in the field. His *Chāndogyabhāsya* was published in 1910 from Lahore, *Bṛhadāraṇyakabhāshya* in 1923 from Kashi and rest of the Bhāshyas from New Delhi, by Govindram Hasanand in 1949.

Swami Darshananand Saraswati's '*Upaniṣad Prakāśa*' has been published, several times by various publishers. He wrote extensive commentaries on six Upaniṣads, i.e. *Īśa, Kena, Kaṭha, Praśna, Muṇḍaka* and *Māṇḍūkya* and clarified many points in the form of question-answer. Vishvshrava Vyās wrote a detailed preface to it, which was published in the later editions. This preface discusses several questions regarding Upaniṣads and exhibits the importance of the Bhāshya of Swami Darshananand.[9]

Swami Vedanand Tirth wrote the gist of *Īśa, Kena* and *Kaṭha Upaniṣads* which was also published with *Upaniṣadprakāśa* of Swami Darshananand. Swami Vedanand published an Upaniṣad by the title *Brahmodyopaniṣad.* Its other names are *Vedopaniṣad* and *Aupaniṣada-śrutisaṅgraha.* It contains Vedic mantras and their Bhāshya giving the sense inherited in these *Upaniṣads.*

The *Ekādaśopaniṣad-Bhāshya* of Pandit Raja Ram comprises Bhāshya of eleven prominent Upaniṣads from *Ish* to *Śvetāśvatara.* He has also contributed two other works, viz. *Upaniṣadon kī Śikṣā* and *Upaniṣadon kī Bhūmikā.* Damodar Satvalekar has done the Bhāshya of nine Upaniṣads excluding *Chāndogya* and *Bṛhadāraṇyaka.* Mahatma Narayan Swami's *Upaniṣad Rahasya*[10] is an easy and knowledgeable Hindi commentary from *Īśa* to *Bṛhadāraṇyaka,* the first ten Upaniṣads. Pandit Ghasiram translated the commentary of *Īśopaniṣad* by Swamiji into English. The translator of Satyarth Prakash in English, Master Durga Prasad also contributed an English translation of *Īśa, Kena, Kaṭha, Praśna, Muṇḍaka, Māṇḍūkya* and *Taittirīya Upaniṣads.* Easy Hindi translation of the first nine i.e. except *Bṛhdāraṇyako* and *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣads* by Acharya Devendranath Shastri of Gurukul Sikandrabad has been published.[11] Brahma Muni contributed several important works on Upaniṣads – *Īśopaniṣad kā Svarūpa, Māṇḍūkyopaniṣad kā Svarūpa, Upaniṣad Sudhāsāra, Chāndogyopaniṣad Kathāmālā, Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad Kathāmālā* etc.

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The work of Satyavrat Siddhantalankar – *Ekādaśopaniṣad* has been very popular.[12] Its preface was written by Dr. Radha Krishnan. Dr. Vedvati Vaidik contributed famous works like – *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad: Dārśanika Adhyayana* (1984), *Upaniṣad Vāṅmaya: Vividh Āyām* (1997), *Upaniṣad ke Rishi* (1997), and *Upaniṣad yugīna Sanskṛti* (2003).

A number of commentaries have been written on *Īśopaniṣad.* In this domain, the prominent Arya Samajist authors include – Indra Vidyavachaspati, Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya, Rajvir Shastri, Harisharan Siddhantalankar, Virendra Muni Shastri, the Novelist Guru Datta, Dr. Satya Prakash, and Sompal Shastri. Dr. Satya Prakash translated *Īśa* and *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣads* in verse, and it was published under the title-*Brahma-Vijñāna.* Ganga Prasad, translated *Kena* and *Kaṭha Upaniṣads* in English.

Other prominent works are - *Kenopaniṣad* by Ramgopal Shastri; *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* by Jagat Kumar Shastri; Easy and Elegant Hindi Commentary of *Kena, Kaṭha,* and *Taittirīya Upaniṣads* by Guru Datta Vaidya; and an extensive Hindi Commentary on *Kena* and *Kaṭha Upaniṣads*[13] by Rajvir Shastri. Some other books by Arya Samajist scholars are *Bhāratīya Sanskṛti kā Vikāsa: Upaniṣad Dhārā* by Dr. Mangal Dev Shastri; *Upaniṣadon kī Utkṛṣṭatā* by Dr. Shivpujan Singh Kushwaha; *Upaniṣad-Dīpikā* by Dr. Ramnath Vedalankar; and *Upaniṣad-Sandeśa* by Dr. Somdev Shastri.

Adhyātma-Mīmānsā (Īśopaniṣad-Rahasya) and *Īśopaniṣad - A study in Ethics and Metaphysics* authored by Swami Vidyanand Saraswati, *Parables and Dialogues from the Upaniṣads* by Swami Satya Prakash, *Upaniṣad Pravacan Mālā* by Diwanchand and *Upaniṣadon kī Kathāen* and *Upaniṣadon kī Adhyātma-dhārā* by Dr. Bhawani Lal Bharatiya are also notable.

## VEDĀṄGAS

*Vedāṅgas* and *Upāṅgas* are important in the list of works, accepted as authentic and worthy of study by Swami Dayanand for the finalisation of *ārṣa* opinion. *Vedāṅgas* help one grasp the sense of Vedic mantras. *Śikṣā, Kalpa, Nirukta, Jyotiṣa, Chanda, Vyākaraṇa* – these *Vedāṅgas* are not the names of some particular works. Ancient as well as modern Acharyas have contributed many valuable works on these *Vedāṅgas,* such as - Nirukta of Yāska, Pāṇini's Śikṣā and *Aṣṭādhyāyī* along with supplementary works, *Chanda Śāstra* of Piṅgala, *Vedāṅga Jyotiṣa* of Lagadha, and other *Śrautsūtras, Gṛhyasūtras, Śulbasūtras* and *Dharmasūtras,* all of which are related to *Kalpa.* For an easy introduction to Vedic literature, Swami Dayanand composed *Vedāṅga Prakāsh* in 14 parts during Samvat 1936 to 1940.

### *Śikṣā Vedāṅga*

Swami Dayanand discovered an old, damaged manuscript of Pāṇini's *Śikṣā* in 1879 in the house of a Pandit in Banaras. He edited it to perfection and got it published alongwith its Hindi explanation under the title *Varṇoccāraṇa-śikṣā.* Pandit Tulsiram Swami edited *Nārdīya Śikṣā* in 1907. *Māṇḍūkī Śikṣā* of the Atharvaveda was edited by Pandit Bhagavaddatta and *Dantyoṣṭhya-vidhi* by Ramgopal Shastri, both of which were published from Lahore in 1921. Dr. Raghuvira completed and critically edited the text

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of Pāṇini's *Śikṣā* of Swami Dayanand with the help of two damaged and incomplete manuscripts received from Adyar Library, Madras (now Chennai) and got it published in July 1931 in the 'Journal of Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland'.[14] Dr. Raghuvira also edited *Āpiśali Śikṣā* on the basis of two old manuscripts and got it published in the Journal of Vedic Studies in 1934. Pandit Yudhishthira Mimamsaka edited *Śikṣā–sūtras* of Āpiśali, Pāṇini and Cāndragomin in 1946. He also wrote some important articles on *Śikṣās* which became very famous. These are – *Vedāṅga-paricaya, Yakāraṣakārayorjakāra-khakāroccāraṇyorvivecanam,* and *Mūla-Pāṇinīya-Śikṣā: Sūtrātmaka yā ślokātmaka* etc. While replying to the objections raised by Manmohan Ghosh, Mimamsakaji authenticated *sūtrātmaka* text along with a critical analysis of various *Pāṭhavidhies* of Pāṇinīya *Śikṣā.* It was carried in the Journal '*Sāhitya*' published from Patna, in 1957. Brahma Muni did a Hindi translation of *Yājñavalkya-śikṣā* which was published in 1968 from Karnal. Jagdish Acharya, a protégé of Mimamsaka, wrote *Vṛddha-śikṣā-śāstram* (*Rahasya-bhāshya-Samhitām*), *Śikṣā-śāstram* (*Laghupāṭha*), *Arbī-śikṣā-śāstram,* and *Śikṣā-mahābhāshyam. Śikṣā-Vedāṅga: Paramparā our siddhānta* is the Ph.D. thesis of Dr. Sudarshan Dev. Udayanacharya has extensively and scientifically explained all the *sūtras* of Paṇinīya-*śikṣā* (*Vṛddhapāṭha*) in *Śikṣā-tattvāloka-bhāsyam.* Acharya Dharmvir has edited *Varṇoccāraṇśikṣācintanam* and *Śikṣā-kalpa-ārṣa-cintanam.* Prachetas hasauthored *Śikṣā-Vedāṅga kī Paramparā aur Ācārya Āpiśali.*

Dr. Mangal Dev Shastri edited *Ṛgveda-Prātiśākhya* in three volumes. He also published a critical edition of *Upanidāna-sūtra* related to the Sāmaveda. Dr. Suryakant edited *Atharvaveda-Prātiśākhya.* Dr. Virendra Kumar Varma edited *Ṛgveda-Prātiśākhya* and *Śukla-Yajurveda-Prātiśākhya. Ṛgveda-Prātiśākhya: Ek Pariśīlana* is an important work by him. Dr. Indra's Ph.D. thesis is – *Prātiśākhyon mein Prayukta Pāribhāṣika Śabdon kā Ālocanātmaka Adhyayana'.* The sūtra text of *Taittirīya-Prātiśākhyam* has been published by Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Bahalgarh (now Revli), Sonipat.

***Kalpa Vedāṅga***

Dr. Raghuvira edited *Drāhyāyaṇa Śrautasūtra* which was published in the 'Journal of Vedic Studies', Lahore. Mangal Dev Shastri edited *Āśvalāyana Śrautasūtra* along with *Siddhānti Bhāshya. Śrauta-yajña-mīmānsā* with Hindi and Sanskrit expositions is a famous work by Yudhishthira Mimamsaka. He has introduced beautifully, the *Yajñas Somayāga, Cāturmāsya, Vājapeya, Agniṣṭoma, Sautrāmaṇī, Bṛhaspatisava, Ukthyādi-ahīna, Rājsūyādi* along with *Agnyādhāna-Agnihotra-Darśa-paurṇamāsa-Suparṇaciti* in his well-known work, viz. *Agnihotra se lekar Aśvamedha prayanta Śrauta-yajñon kā Sanksipta Paricaya.* Acharya Vijaypal has edited *Baudhāyana-śrautasūtram* (*dvitīyapraśnoagnyādheya-prakarṇātmakaḥ*) along with *Subhodhini vṛtti.* Bhimsen Sharma contributed *Darśapaurṇamāsa-paddhatiḥ* (*Sarvaśrauteṣṭi-prakṛtiḥ*) and Dr. Vedpal Sunith, *Darśpaurṇamāseṣṭi-rahasyaprakāśa.*

The Arya Samajists have also worked on *Gṛhyasūtras.* Dr. Raghuvira critically edited *Vārāha-gṛhyasūtra* along with the *paddhatis* of Gangadhar and Vashishṭha on the basis of three manuscripts. It was originally his dissertation submitted to Government University, Utrecht and was published later in 1930. Pandit Bhagavaddatta edited *Bārhaspatya sūtra* and *Baijvāpa Gṛhya-samkalana* which were published in 1938. Pandit

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Yudhishthira Mimamsaka edited *Kātyāyana Gṛhyasūtra.* Sitaram Sehgal edited *Śānkhāyana Gṛhyasūtra* which was published from Delhi in 1960. Dr. Vedpal wrote a Hindi commentary of *Pāraskara-Gṛhyasūtra* along with *Karka Bhāshya* and Dr. Satyavrat Rajesh translated *Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra* in Hindi, both published in 2008. An edition of *Pāraskara-Gṛhyasūtra* by Haridatta Shastri is also available.

Dr. Satya Prakash has significantly contributed to the domain of *Śulva sūtras.* He edited *Baudhāyana Śulvasūtra* along with a Sanskrit commentary of *Dvārikānātha Yajvā,* as well as the English translation by G.Thibout with an extensive Preface in English. In his second work – *The śulvasūtras,* he edited the Sanskrit text of *Baudhāyana, Āpastamba, Kātyāyana* and *Mānava śulvasūtras.* Both the works were published in 1979. Swami Satya Prakash has done an English translation of *Āpastamba Śulvasūtra* along with Sanskrit Tikas by *Kapardi, Karvind* and *Sundararāj.*

Vedmitra edited *Gautama Dharmasūtra,* published in 1969 from Delhi. Narendra Kumar Acharya has edited *Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra* along with *Vivaraṇa Vṛtti* of Govind Swami and published it in 1999 from Delhi.

***Nirukta Vedāṅga***

*Nirukta Śāstram* was edited by Pandit Bhagavaddatta and *Nirukta* by Pandit Raja Ram, which were published from Amritsar and Lahore respectively. Lakshman Sarup edited *Nirukta* and *Skanda Maheśvara Bhāshya,* both published from Lahore. Lakshman Sarup had also contributed two important works viz. *Nighaṇṭu and Nirukta* and *Indices and Appendices to the Nirukta.* Pandit Brahm Dutt Jigyasu wrote on important topics like *Veda aur Nirukta, Niruktakāra aur Veda mein Itihāsa* and *Devāpi aur Śāntanu ke Vedic Ākhyāna kā Vāstvika Svaroopa.* Pandit Yudhishthira Mimanska edited *Nirukta Samuccaya* of Vararuchi and wrote brief works like *Kim Yāskīya Nirvacanāni Unmattagītāni.* Acharya Vijaypal edited *Nighaṇṭu-Nirvacanam* and *Nirukta-śloka-vārttikam.* Vishveshrva Vyās contributed – *Nirukta ko samajhne me Prācina Āchāryon kī Bhūla* and *Ākhyāna aur Itihāsa mein Bheda.* Chamupati wrote *Yāska-yuga* and Prajna Devi, *Veda ke sabhī śabda yaugika hain.* Pandit Dev Sharma Shastri, Pandit Chhajjuram Shastri, Acharya Bhagirath Shastri and Acharya Vishveshvar Siddhant Shiromani contributed Hindi explanations of *Nirukta. Nirukta-Sammarśaḥ* is a work written by Brahma Muni Parivrajaka. Chandramani Vidyalankar wrote two volumes – *Vedārtha Dīpika Nirukta Bhāshya.* Research articles of Dr. Vikram Kumar Viveki – *Yāska ke Nirvacana tathā Akhyānavāda* and of Prof. Ranvir Singh, – *Yāska-vyākhyāta Nighaṇṭu kā Kṛttritva: Ek Samādhāna,*[15] and *Vedārtha-Prakāśaka Nirukta*[16] are also quite informative. *Rocantām Śabdabhumayaḥ* is the work of Dr. Sudyumna. Virjanand Daivkarni edited the text of *Nirukta* which was published by Paropkarini Sabha, Ajmer and Dr. Dharmvir Vidyavaridhi edited *Vedic Nighaṇṭu Saṅgraha* (publisher Panini Dham, Tilora, Rajasthan). Some other important books by the Arya Samajist scholars are: Dr. Ishvar Chandra Sharma – *Katipaya Vedic Śabdon ke Arthon ki Mīmānsā;* Shant Anubhavanand Saraswati – *Nirukta kā Mul Veda mein;* Dharmdev Niruktacharya – *Tvāṣṭri-saraṇyu ke Ākhyāna kā Vāstavika Svaroopa;* Dr. Shivpujan Singh Kushwah – *Shāntnu aur Devāpi ki kathā kā Vāstvika Svaroopa;* Dr. Raghuvir Vedalankar – *Niruktākār kā Aitihāsika Pakṣa;* and Dr. Ramnath Vedalankar – *Vedic Śabdārth Vicār.* Prof. Roopkishore Shastri

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wrote – *Vedic Vāṅgmaya Nirvacana Koṣa, Dayānand Nirukti-Vyutpatti-Koṣa, Bṛhad-Vedabhāshya-Nirukti-Vyotpatti-koṣa, Sanhitāsu Nirvacana-mulam,* and *Vedopajñā-Nirvacana Vidyā.*

***Jyotiṣa Vedāṅga***

Arya Samajist scholars have contributed many works on *Gaṇita Jyotiṣa.* Pandit Ganga Prasad (retired Judge) wrote *Jyotiṣa Candrikā* and Pandit Mansaram authored *Jyotiṣh Mīmānsā.* Mahavir Prasad Shrivastava edited and published *Sūrya Siddhānta* along with *Vijñāna-Bhāshya* in 1940 from Prayag. Five chapters of 'Founders of Science in Ancient India' – an important work by Swami Satya Prakash – are related to *Jyotiṣa.* These relate to – *Dirghatamas: The Discoverer of the Vedic 'Era', 'Medhātithi'* – the first to extend numerals to billions; Aryabhatt, who laid the foundations of Algebra; Lagadha – the first to rationalise Astronomy; and Latdev and Shrishen who introduced Greek Astronomy to India. This work was translated into Hindi in 1967. Vedavrat Mimamsaka's book *Jyotiṣa Vivek* was published in 1975. Indradev Yati edited a *Sāyaṇa Panchāṅga* which was published in 1997. Dr. Sudyumna Acharya wrote – *Gaṇita Śāstra ke Vikās kī Bhārtīya Paramparā, Vedon mein Viśva-Jyotiṣa ke liye Kālmān* and *Bhūgolamān tathā Dārśnika Paddhati ke Sūtra* which were published in 2006 and are considered quite valuable. He also edited *Triśatikā (Pāti-Gaṇita-Sāraḥ)* with extensive an explanation. *The Almanacs deviating from Vedic Seasons* by Acharya Darshneya Lokesh is an original work on the subject.[17]

***Chanda Vedāṅga***

Pandit Yudhishthira Mimamsaka published a marvelous monograph, viz. *Vedic Chāndo-Mīmānsā* in 1960 in which he has extensively analysed the various Vedic metres on the basis of *Nidānasūtra, Upanidāna-sūtra, Piṅgala-Chandaḥ-sūtra, Ṛk-sarvānukramaṇī,* and *Ṛk-Prāti-Śākhya* etc. Acharya Vijaypal edited *Piṅgala-Chandaḥ-sūtram* along with *Piṅgala-chando-viciti-bhāshya* of Yadav Prakash which was published in 1988. Dr. Kapil Dev Dwivedi did Hindi and English translations of *Piṅgala-Chandaḥ-sūtram* along with the usages of Vedic Gaṇita, which was published in 2008. Virjanand Daivkarni translated in Hindi the *Chandaḥ Sūtram,* a work authored by Pandit Akhilanand with Sanskrit commentary, and it has been published by Vrindavan Shodh Sansthan, Delhi.

***Vyākaraṇa Vedāṅga***

Swami Virjanand Dandi had dictated an elaborate explanation of the sūtras of a few chapters of Pāṇīnian Aṣṭādhyāyī by the name – *Pāṇīniya Sūtrārtha Prakāśa.* The whole manuscript was not authored by Dandiji.[18] At places, *Vāmana-jayāditya,* the author of *Kāśikā* and Bhattoji Dikshit, the author of *Siddhānta Kaumudī* have been criticised. This manuscript has been the basis of Doctoral research by some scholars.[19] Swami Dayanand Saraswati himself did a bhāshya of the first four chapters of Aṣṭādhyāyī. Dr. Raghuvira edited it along with an elaborate preface, nearly half a cenutry after the demise of Swami Dayanand. This work was published only up to the third chapter. The fourth chapter of *Aṣṭādhyāyī Bhāshya* was published in 1997 from Ajmer. Rajvir Shastri translated the *Sanskrit Bhāshya* in Hindi. In the *Prathamāvṛtti* of *Aṣṭādhyāyī.* Extensive

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explanation in Hindi of each *sūtra* along with that of *Padacheda, Vibhakti, Adhikāra, Anuvṛtti, Artha, Udahāraṇa* and *Siddhi* has been done by Brahm Dutt Jigyasu and Prajñā Devi. Brahm Dutt Jigyasu edited *Aṣṭādhyāyī Sūtrapāṭha* and wrote a book viz. *Sanskrit Paṭhan-pāṭhan kī Anubhūt Saralatam Vidhi.* Prajñā Devi's Ph.D. thesis is entitled – *Kāśikāyāḥ Samikṣātmakamadhyāyanam.*

The work of Brahm Dutt Jigyasu was carried forward by Yudhishthira Mimamsaka. His contribution is indeed of institutional proportions. He edited and published *Kṣīrataraṅginī,* the oldest commentary of the South-Western recension of *Pāṇinīya Dhātupāṭha* and also the *Daśapādyuṇādivṛtti-sangraha* in two parts. He also edited *Śrīkṛṣṇalīlā, Deva Kṛtam Daivam* of *Śukamuni* and Kannad-commentary by Shri Channavira Kavi along with its Sanskrit translation. He contributed Sanskrit explanations of 135 sūtras available in *Kāśkṛtsna-Vyākaraṇam* and edited *Uṇādi-kośa vyākhyā* of Pañcapādī Uṇādi Pāṭha authored by Swami Dayanand. Yudhishthira Mimamsaka studied about 200 printed and hand-written ancient and near-extinct texts of *Bhāgavṛtti* of *Aṣṭādhyāyī* and published it as *Bhāgavṛtti-sankalanam. Sanskrit-Dhātukośaḥ, Vāmanīyam Liṅgānuśāsanam* (with *Svopajñāvṛtti*), *Śabda-rupāvali* and *Dhātu-pāṭhaḥ* (embodying the mention of *Dhātu-gaṇa-pada-seṭ-aniṭ* and *Nirdeśaka-dhātusucī*) are also edited by Mimamsaka. His Hindi commentary on the first two Ahnikas of Mahābhāshya of Patañjali was published in three parts. His *Sanskrit Vyākaraṇa Śāstra kā Itihāsa,* in three volumes, is the most extensive and perhaps the best work in this sphere.

Acharya Vijaypal and Dr. Sudyumna Acharya carried forward the legacy of Mimamsaka. Acharya Vijaypal edited the *Kāśikā* of *Vāmana-Jayāditya* and *Mādhavaīyā Dhātuvṛttiḥ.* Complete Mahabhāshya along with notes edited by Vedavrat Shastri was published by Gurukul Jhajjar in 1963. Dr. Sudyumna Acharya published Hindi explanation of third, fourth and fifth chapters of Mahābhāṣya. Dr. Sudarshan Dev Acharya has written – *Aṣṭādhyāyī-pravacanam, Phiṭasūtra-pradīpaḥ* and *Liṅgānuśāsanavṛtti.* Dr. Raghuvir Vedalankar translated the first *pada* of *Kāśikā* in Hindi and also authored *Kāśikā kā samālocanātmaka Adhyayana.* Jagdish Acharya contributed the work *Kāśikā-Mahāpariṣkāraḥ.* Bhim Singh Vedalankar has written an extensive Hindi commentary on the first nine *Āhnikas* of Mahābhāshya. His other published works are – *Pātañjala Mahābhāṣya mein Pratyākhyāta sūtra: Eka Samīkṣātmaka adhyayana, Pātañjala Mahābhāṣya mein apūrva Kalpanāyen* and *Sanskrit Vyākaraṇa Darśana.* Charudev Shastri translated first *Āhnikas* of Mahābhāshya in Hindi. He also contributed – *Pāṇini Re-interpreted* and *Śabdāpaśabdaviveka.* Nardev Shastri contributed an important work, viz. *Pāṇinīya-śabdārthasambandha-siddhānta. Sanskrit Kośon kā Udbhava aur Vikāsa* is the Ph.D. thesis of Ranvir Singh. *Arthavijñāna aur Vyākaraṇa Darśana* is the thesis of Kapil Dev Dwivedi. Mahavir Mimamsaka's scholarly works are – *Pāṇini as Grammarian* (with special reference to compound formation) and *Samartha Theory of Pāṇini and Sentence Derivation.* Dr. Ramprakash Varni wrote the book- *Ācārya Sāyaṇa aur unakī Mādhavaīyā Dhātuvṛtti.* Dr. Dharmvir Vidyavaridhi's authored a scholarly work – *Phiṭsūtrāṣṭādhyāyyoḥ Svaraśastrāṇāṁ Tulanātmakamadhyayanam.* Acharya Pradyumn edited *Pāribhāṣika* and Chandradatta Sharma edited *Bhaṭṭayajñeśvara's Gaṇaratnāvalī.* Satyanand Vedavagish's

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main works are – *Pāṇinīya Śabdānuśāsanam* (*parśīṣṭa daśatayī sahitam*), *Aṣṭādhyāyī prayoga dīpikāvṛttiḥ*, and *Pāṇinīya Śabdānuśasanam* (*vaidikādigranthoddharaṇasahitam*) etc.

*Pāṇini: A Survey of Research* and *Recent Researches in Pāṇinīan Studies* is a valuable contribution by Prof. George Kardona, He has critically and expensively analysed the works of seventeen Arya Samajist scholars: Pandit Yudhishthira Mimamsaka, Dr. Raghuvira, Charudev Shastri, Bhimsen Shastri, Dr. Satyavrat Shastri, Kapil Dev Shastri, Mahavir Mimamsaka, Nardev Shastri, Acharya Vijaypal, Chandradatt Sharma, Vedprakash Vidyavachaspati, Raghuvir Vedalankar, Bhim Singh Vedalankar, Yajnaveer Dahiya, Virendra Kumar Alankar, Dr. Sudyumna Acharya, and Dharmendra Kumar.

***Upāṅga (Darśana Śāstra)***

*Upāṅgas* quite like the *Vedāṅgas* have been considered authentic and readable by Swami Dayanand. *Upāṅgas* are familiarly called *Darśana-śāstras.* Divided into three groups, the six *Upāṅgas* are- (1.) *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika,* (2.) *Sāmkhya-Yoga,* (3.) *Pūrva-Mīmānsā* and *Uttar-Mīmānsā. Uttar-Mīmānsā* is also called *Śārirak-Sūtra, Brahma Sūtra or Vedānta-Darśana.*

Though Swami Dayanand, a great scholar of Darśanas, could not find the time to write commentary on any Darśana, he has repeatedly discussed the principles of all the Darśanas in *Satyārth Prakāsh* and his other works, which are impregnated by the philosophical ideas of the Darśanas. Swamiji has aptly criticised the opinions of Shankarāchārya, Nimbark, Madhva, Ramanuja and Vallabhacharya in *Satyārth Prakāsh, Vedaviruddhamata-Khaṇḍana, Vedāntidhvāntnivāraṇa* and *Śikṣāpatrī-dwāntnivāraṇa.* To authenticate his stand, he directly quotes from the Vedic Samhitās, while the medieval Dārśanik exponents, with little exposure to Vedas, mostly relied on Upaniṣads. Thus *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā* and *Satyārth Prakāsh* are the initial works of Swami Dayanand which base their principled stand on the original Vedic thought. Swami Dayanand saw a deep inter-relationship among the six Darśanas. He strongly initiated and established the principle that *Īśvara, jīva* and *prakṛti* are eternal and everlasting, a philosophical concept later called *Traitavāda* by scholars. He proved that *jīvātmā* is infinitesimally small and therefore it can acquire and accommodate different bodies like an ant and an elephant. It is called *Jīvātmā-paricchinnatāvāda.* The return from *mukti* to the cycle of birth and death and the absence of dis-agreement among the six schools of Darśanas are the main philosophical opinions of Swami Dayanand.

Arya Samajist scholars have written on three dimensions of this domain – (i) Explanation of the texts of six Darśanas; (ii) Analytical works to clarify the principles of a particular *Darśana*; and (iii) Separate and specific works on philosophical topics.

Swami Darshananand Saraswati completed the Urdu Bhāshyas of *Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika* and *Sāmkhya.* The *Vedānta-Darśana Bhāshya* could not be completed. These were translated in Hindi by Gokul Chandra Dikshit.[20] Mahamahopadhyaya Aryamuni, a great scholar of the first generation of Arya Samajists wrote *Nyāyāryya-bhāshya, Vaiśeṣikāryya-bhāshya, Sānkhyāryya-bhāshya, Pūrvamīmānsāryya-bhāshya* (2 parts) and *Vedāntāryya-bhāshya.* In the preface to the *Nyāya-Darśana-bhāshya,* he states that his reason for creating this *Āryabhāshya* was to present the tough topics of philosophy in an easy

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manner and to negate the opinions of non-Vedic Bhāshyakāras like-*Brahmopādān-kāraṇavādi, Sarvānityatvavādī, Sarvamithyāvādī, Sarvanityatvavādī,* and *Śūnyavādī.*[21]

Tulsiram Swami contributed easy and logical Bhāshyas of the five Darśanas except *Mīmānsā.*[22] Brahma Muni Parivrajak penned the commentary of six Darśanas in Sanskrit in the light of the guidelines given by Swami Dayanand. His commentaries on *Vedānta Darśana-sanskrit-bhāshya* (1954), *Sāmkhyadarśana-Sanskrit-bhāshya* (1955), *Vaiśeṣikadarśana-Sanskritbhāshya* (1962), *Nyāyadarśana-Vātsyāyana-Bhāshya* (a part in 1968) and on *Yogadarśana* along with *Vyāsbhāshya* under the title *Ārṣayogapradīpika* (Samvat 2005) were published in the respective years mentioned in the brackets. Pandit Mayashankar translated all the six *Darśanas* in Gujarati. Acharya Gyaneshwar contributed *Yogdarśanam.*

Pandit Udaiveer Shastri is famous for his deep study and scholarly writings on *Darśanas.* He has contributed *Vidyodaya Bhāshyam* on all the six *Darśanas.* He could complete the *Vidyodaya Bhāshya* on *Mīmānsā* only up to third chapter, before his demise. He also wrote and published – *Sāmkhya-Darśana kā Itihāsa* (1951), *Sāmkhya-Siddhānt tathā Prācin Sāmkhya-Sandarbha* (1962), and *Vedānta-Darśana kā Itihāsa* (1970). With his critical outlook, he has also pointed out interpolations in these texts. Dr. Tulsi Ram has done an English translation of *Pātañjala Yogadarśana.* It was published by Gurukul Jhajjar.

The contribution of Pandit Gangaprasad Upadhyaya is extensive and substantial both in terms of quality and quantity. He translated in Hindi the *Shabar-bhāshya of Mīmānsā -Darśana.*[23] His Hindi translation of Shankarāchārya's *Sarva-darśana-siddhānta-sangraha,* was published in 1925. Upadhyaya's original philosophical works are – *Āstikavāda*[24] (1926), *Advaitavāda* (1928), *Shankara-Rāmānuja-Dayanand* (1930), *Jīvātmā* (1933), *Shankarabhāshyalocan* (1947), *Mukti se Punravṛitti* (1950), *Philosophy of Dayanand* (1955), *Vedic Philosophy, I and my God,* and *Karmaphal-Siddhānta* etc. Several of his works have been translated into different languages. The Hindi translation of *Worship* was published under the title *Poojā* and of *I and my God* as *Mein aur Merā Bhagwān. Philosophy of Dayanand* was translated in Hindi, *Worship* in Telugu and *Āstikavāda* in Telugu and Gujarati.

Pandit Yudhishthira Mimamsaka wrote an extensive commentary *Shabar-bhāshya* of *Mīmānsā* in Hindi by the title *Ārṣmatavimarśinī* with critical notes up to 9th chapter covering three-fourths of the text. It was published in seven volumes by Ramlal Kapoor Trust, during 1977-1993. Pandit Devdatta Sharmopadhyaya translated the first three chapters of *Jaimini Sūtra* in Hindi. Haridatta Shastri translated *Mīmānsā Paribhāṣā* in Hindi under the title *Arthaprakāshikā.* Vachaspati Upadhyaya wrote a Hindi commentary on *Ārṣa Saṅgraha* entitled – *Arthaloka-lochana.*

Acharya Anand Prakash's translations of *Sāmkhya Darśana* and *Vaiśeṣika Darśana* were published in 2008 and 2014 respectively. Gurudatt Vaidya wrote easy Hindi Bhāshyas on *Sāmkhya* and *Brahma sūtra.* Arya scholars Acharya Rajvir Shastri and Swami Satyapati Parivrajak have attempted translations, explanations and Bhāshyas of Yoga-Darśana. Raja Ram Shastri published several works on *Darśana-śāstra,* such as – *Nyāya Darśana Vātsyayana Bhāshya kā Hindi Anuvāda, Vaiśeṣika Darśana, Sāmkhya Darśana, Yoga Darśana, Vedānta Darśana, Tattvsamas Sūtra* and *Sāmkhyakārikā* etc. Rajvir Shastri

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published *Yoga Mīmānsā* (authored by Swami Satyapati Parivrajak), *Pātañjal Yoga-Darśana-bhāshyam, Ṣaḍdarśanapadānukramaṇikā.* Swami Satya Prakash Saraswati has authentically analysed the *Pātañjal Yoga Darśana* in English. His other works on Yoga Darśana are – *Yoga aur uskī Anubhūmikā, Yoga aur Siddhānt Sādhanā, Yoga aur Prāṇsaushthava,* and *Yoga Prāṇāyāma aur Chetanāyen.* He wrote *A Critical study of the Philosophy of Dayanand*[25] in 1938. Swami Jagadishwaranand Saraswati made available a brief translation of the six Darśanas in simple Hindi, with an alphabetical Index of all the sūtras. Pandit Shiv Shankar Kavyatirth contributed a qualitative philosophical book, viz. *Traisidhāntādarśa. Yoga Mīmānsā* of Swami Satyapati Parivrajak dispelled some false notions regarding *yoga* and presented its authentic form. Mahatma Narayan Swami's *Yoga Rahasya, Karma-Rahasya, Ātmā-Darśana,* and *Mṛtyu aur Parloka,* present a deep analysis of the subjects contained therein.

Some important works written on different subjects include *Jīvātmā-jyoti* and *Sukh-Duḥkh Mīmānsā* by Acharya Rajvir Shastri; *Anāsakti Yoga: Mokṣa ki Pagaḍaṇḍī* by Jagannath Pathik; *Dhyāna-yoga-prakāsh* by Lakshmananand Saraswati; *Pātañjal yoga-pradip* by Omanand Tirth; *Ṣaḍdarśana-Samanvaya* by Buddhdev Mirpuri; *Artha-Dharma-Mīmānsā* by Ishvar Chandra Sharma; *Darśana-Tattva-vivek, Karma Mīmānsā* and *Tattvartha darsha* by Vaidya Nath Shastri; *Vedic-Darśana* by Fateh Singh, *Vedic-commentaries* (*vṛittis*) on five Darśanas, excluding Mīmānsā, by Hari Prasad Vedic Muni; *Vedānta Prāchīn aur Navīn* by Ramgopal Shastri; *Vedānta-tattva-kaumudī* and *Śaḍdarśanādarsh* by Aryamuni; *Vedic Darśana, Ārṣa Darśana,* and *Anādi tattva* by Chamupati; *Do Sanātan Sattaen* by Ramchandra Dehalvi; *Siddhānt Shatakam* and *Vedic Sṛṣṭi-pralaya-Muktivāda kī Yathārthatā* by Jaidatt Upreti; *Anādi-tattva-Darśana, Tattvamasi, Prasthāntrayi aur Advaita Vedānta, Mein Brahma Hun (Dvaita-Siddhi) and Anatomy of Vedānta* by Laxmidatt Dikshit (Vidyanand Saraswati); *Dvaitadvaita Sāmvada* by Bhimsen Sharma; *Sukh-Duḥkh ki Dārśanika Mīmānsā* and *Kyā Apkī Ayu Nishchit Hai* by Vishuddhanand Misra; *Kāla-Akāla Mṛtyu Vichāra* by Vedvrat Mimamsaka and Om Prakash Shastri; and *Sukh-Duḥkh Jīvātmā ke Guṇa Hain Prakṛti ke Nahin* by Vedprakash Shrotriya. Mahamahopadhyaya Pandit Aryamuni has established that the six schools of Indian Philosophy are in complete unanimity with each other, and has denounced the incorrect bhāshyas that allege a provision of killing animals in Vedic Yajñas.

Dr. Shrinivas Shastri contributed *Dayanand Darśana: Ek Adhyayana* which was published in 1977. *Dayanand-Darśana* by Dr. Ved Prakash, *Bhāratīya Darśanon mein Antarnihit Samarupatā* by Vagish Kumar; *Traitavāda kā Udbhava aur Vikāsa* by Yogendra Kumar Shastri; *Swami Dayanand ke Vedabhāshya ki Dārśanika Samīkshā* by Omdatt Sharma and *Maharshi Dayanand kā Dārśanika Cintana* by Ramesh Datta also deserve a mention.

Arya Samajist scholars have also contributed original philosophical works in Sanskrit and Hindi. Vishveshvar Siddhant Shiromani wrote *Darśana Mīmānsā* which follows *kārikā* style and is an important work with a new outlook. He has also written *Prāpanca Paricaya, Nītiśāstram,* and *Manovijñāna Śāstram* in Sanskrit verse and *Pāścātya Tarka Śāstram* in Sanskrit. His *Tarkarahasya Dīpikā* and Hindi commentary on *Haridāsīyavivṛitti* of *Nyāya-kusumāñjali* are also not worthy.[26] Jagdish Acharya wrote in Sanskrit - *Paramānu-Darśanam* on the basis of philosophical concepts of Kaṇāda. Dr.

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Sudyumna Acharya wrote *Adhivijñānam Darśana Śāstram* in Sanskrit and *Bhāratīya Darśana aur Ādhunika Vijñāna* in Sanskrit and Hindi based on the comparative study of Indian Philosophical systems and modern scientific concepts. Several scholars have engaged with the main principles of Indian philosophy and philosophical concepts of Arya Samaj. Vivek Bhushan (Vivekanand Parivrajak) wrote (i.) *Tattva-jñāna,* (ii.) *Utkṛṣṭa Śankā-samādhāna,* and (iii.) *Duḥkha: Swarup, Kāraṇa aur Nivāraṇa. Tattva-jñāna* includes the analysis of the similarities and differences and the tasks of *Īśvara, jīva* and *prakṛti* on the basis of famous Nyāyaśāstriya *Pancāvayava Vākyas.* The works of Somdev Shastri are - - *Darśanon kā Tattvajñāna* (2000), *Nyāya-vaiśeṣika Sandeśa* (2008), *Sāmkhya yoga Sandeśa* (2009), and *Vedānta-Mīmānsā-sandeśa* (2010).

Shashiprabha Kumar has made a valuable contribution to the study of *Vaiśeṣika Darśana* in particular and Indian Philosophy in general. *Vaiśeṣika Darśana mein Padārtha-Nirupana* (1992), *Vaiśeṣika Darśana Parishīlana* (1999), *Bhāratīya Darśanam* (1999), *Facets of Indian Philosophical Thoughts* (1999), *Bhāratīya Dārśanika Chintana. Janmānas par Prabhav* (2003) and *Self, Society and Value: Reflection on Indian Philosophical Thought* (2005) etc. are her prominent publications. Her book *'Classical Vaiśeṣika in Indian Philosophy: on knowing and what is to be known'* was published in 2013 by Taylor and Francis Group Routledge publishers, Oxford, U.K.

## BIOGRAPHICAL LITERATURE

The biographical literature concerning the prominent personalities of Arya Samaj is fairly vast. First of all, Gopal Shastri Sharma (Gopal Rao Hari) wrote *Dayanand Digvijayārka* in three parts during 1881-1887. Pandit Lekhram travelled far and wide to collect informations regarding the life of Rishi Dayanand. He was however martyred, before he could pen it down, and the material was systemised by Master Atmaram Amritsari, and was published in Urdu by Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Punjab, Lahore in 1897. Its Hindi version by Raghunandan Singh Nirmal could be published only in the next century by Arya Samaj, Naya Bans, Delhi in 1971. Since then, it has had several reprints. On the basis of the material collected by Pandit Lekhram, Lakshman Aryopadeshak wrote *Mukammal Jīvana Charitra: Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati,* which was published in 1916. Rajendra Jigyasu translated it into Hindi and published with editorial comments in two parts in 2012 from Abohar. Mehta Radhakishan authored *Maharshi Swami Dayanand aur Unkī Tālīm* (publisher: Arya Pradeshik Pratinidhi Sabha, Lahore, 1926) and Lala Lajpat Rai *Maharshi Swami Dayanand Saraswati aur unkā Kām.* These books in Urdu are also based on the material collected by Pandit Lekhram.

Another person who struggled long and hard to gather details of Swamiji's life was Devendranath Mukhopadhyaya. His book *Dayanand Charit* written in Bengali in 1896 was translated in Hindi by Pandit Ghasiram and was published by Govindram Hasanand, Delhi in 1912. The same publisher published in 1933, *Maharshi Dayanand kā Jivan Charit* (written by Mukhopadhyaya) in two parts. Mukhopadhyaya's books *Ādarsh Sudhārak Dayanand* and *Dayanand Divya Darshana* (translator Ghasiram) are also available. *Ādarsh Sudhārak Dayanand* has also been translated into Gujarati.

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Devendranath Mukhopadhyaya's book *Prabhu kī den Dayanand* was published by Arya Prakashan Pustakalaya, New Delhi in 1982.

In English, Durga Prasad wrote *Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati* in 1892 and *Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati on Indian Religions* in 1900 and got them published from Lahore. Bawa Arjan Singh's *Dayananda Saraswati* was published by Punjab Printing Works, Lahore in 1901. Jivan Das' book *Swami Dayanand Saraswati and the Arya Samaj* printed at The Punjab Printing Press, Lahore appeared in 1902. Bawa Chhajju Singh authored *Life and Teachings of Swami Dayananda* in 1903. A detailed biography *Life of Dayanand Saraswati* was written in English by Harbilas Sarda and published by Paropkarini Sabha, Ajmer in 1946. Kalicharan Sharma, a known scholar of Arabic and Persian, penned the life story of Swami Dayanand in Persian. Many more books on the life and works of Swami Dayanand Saraswati have been written by several authors in different languages from time to time.

*Srīmaddayanand Prakash* written by Swami Satyanand, in a tone of devotion has been published by several publishers. It was translated into Urdu by Sudarshan and was published from Lahore in 1924. Rambilas Sarda's book *Arya Dharmendra Jīvan* was published by Paropkarini Sabha, Ajmer in 1946. Dr. Bhawani Lal Bhartiya consulted the available biographies of Dayanand and authored *Navjāgran ke Purodhā Dayanand Saraswati.* It was published by Vedic Yantralaya, Ajmer in 1983 and by Shri Gudhmal Prahlad Kumar Arya Darmarth Trust, Hindon City, Rajasthan in two parts, in 2009. Devendranath Mukhopadhyaya's *Swami Dayanand Janmādi Nirṇaya* and Vijayshankar Mulshankar's *Dayanand Janm Sthān Nirṇaya tathā Tankārā Shatābdi* have helped establish the family linage and place of birth of Swamiji. Dr. Jwalant Kumar's book *Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati kī Pramāṇik Janm Tithi* has established the date of his birth. Dr. Kushaldev Shastri contributed *Maharshi Dayanand: Kāl aur Kṛtitva. Rishi Dayanand kī Prārambhik Jīvnī* written by Dayal Muni Arya of Tankara (ed. Bhavesh Merja), and published by Satyarth Prakashan, Kurukshetra in 2015, is a valuable document dispellings several mis-conceptions about the parentage and early life of Swamiji.

The life story of Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi was first written in English by Lala Lajpat Rai in 1891. It was edited, revised and republished in 1998 by Dr. Ram Prakash after a gap of 107 years. Its several editions have been published since then. Dr. Bhawani Lal Bhartiya has translated Lajpat Rai's book into Hindi. A detailed life story of Guru Datta Vidyarthi by Dr. Ram Prakash was published in April 1969. Its foreward was written by Principal Bhagwan Das. So far it has been published nine times.

*Virjanand Charit* written by Devendranath Mukhopadhyaya in Bengali and translated by Pandit Ghasiram, was first published in December 1919 by Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow. *Virjanand-prakāsh* written by Bhimsen Shastri appeared in 1959. Dr. Ram Prakash has written a well-researched life story of Swami Virjanand – *Guru Virjanand Dandi: Jiwan evam Darśana* – published by Satyarth Prakashan, Kurukshetra in 2002. The book has been translated in English by the author himself. On the advice of Mahatma Narayan Swami, Pandit Mukunddev of Mathura wrote a biography of Swami Virjanand Dandi under the title *Daṇḍījī kī Jīvanī* in 1924. After a long wait, it was for the first time edited and published by Dr. Ram Prakash in 2003.

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Right from Swami Dayanand Saraswati onwards, some leaders of the Arya Samaj have written their autobiographies. Swami Dayanand sent his autobiography in Hindi to The Theosophical Society which was published in various issues of The Theosophist during 1879-1880. It was later edited by Madam H.P. Blavatsky as '*Autobiography of Pandit Dayanand Saraswati*' and published by The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras in 1952. The autobiography in Hindi has been edited by several scholars like Bhagavaddatta and published.[27] Certain details of his life were narrated by Swamiji at Poona on August 4, 1875. Prof. K.C. Yadav has translated the biography in English '*Autobiography of Dayanand Saraswati*' which has been well received. Several leaders who have written their autobiographies include Shaheed Ram Prasad Bismil[28] of Kakori fame, Lala Lajpat Rai,[29] Swami Shraddhanand,[30] Mahatma Narayan Swami,[31] Swami Vedanand,[32] Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya,[33] Bhai Paramanand,[34] Harbilas Sarda,[35] Mehr Chand Mahajan,[36] Indra Vidyavachaspati,[37] Swami Satyapati,[38] Swami Vidyanand Videh[39] and Yudhishthira Mimamsaka.[40]

Swami Shraddhanand wrote the life story of Pandit Lekhram after his martyrdom. Rajendra Jigyasu has written several books on Pandit Lekhram[41] and Swami Swatantranand.[42] The life story of Mahatma Hans Raj has been written by several authors including Mahatma Anand Swami[43] and Diwan Chand.[44] Indra Vidyavachaspati wrote an engaging book entitled '*Mere Pitā*' about his father, Swami Shraddhanand. His life story has been penned by Satyadev Vidyalankar and Swami Swantantranand, among others. The biographies of Swami Atmanand (*Jivan Jyoti*) and Mahashya Krishan (*Jivan Saṅgharsha*) have been written by Om Prakash Sidhant Shiromani and Satyadev Vidyalankar respectively.

## KHAṆḌANA-MAṆḌANA LITERATURE

India has a well established tradition in the field of religious and philosophical polemics of refuting, criticising and critiquing other beliefs and establishing one's principles. Acharya Shankara, Kumaril Bhatt, Vachaspati Misra, Shabarswami, Udayanacharya and other scholars adopted this technique extensively. Medieval saints like Kabir, Nanak, Dadu, and Raidas also followed this style to criticise the religious hypocrisy, unscientific customs of the day and the blind faiths prevalent in the society.

Swami Dayanand has examined various non-Vedic sects using this style particularly in the second half of *Satyārth Prakāsh*. He has explained the religious and philosophical principles on the basis of logic and evidence from the Vedas and other *ārṣa granthas*. He also authored *Śikṣāpatrīdhwāntanivāraṇa, Vedaviruddhamat Khaṇḍana, Vedāntidhwānt-nivāraṇa, Bhramochhedana, Bhāgwata Khaṇḍana,* and *Advaitmata Khaṇḍana* to scrutinise the non-Vedic sects. These books created a stir in the religious circles. It may be mentioned that unlike any other book in Hindi, the maximum number of books were written for and against *Satyārth Prakāsh*. The language of certain books written against Swami Dayanand and Arya Samaj is rather uncivil. Hurt by such attacks, some Arya Samajist writers did retaliate as well, with writings of their own.

Bhagavaddatta, Yudhishthira Mimamsaka, Swami Vedanand, Jagdev Singh Siddhanti and others published *Satyārth Prakāsh* with their comments and explanatory

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notes. Shivpujan Singh Kushwaha authored *Satyārth Prakāsh Bhāshya* (published by Srimaddayanand Vedic Shodh Sansthan, Kanpur in 1955). Swami Vidyanand and Amar Swami wrote *Satyarthbhāskar* (publisher: International Aryan Foundation, Mumbai 1993) and *Satyārth Prakāsh Maṇḍana* respectively.

Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi wrote three important articles on the philosophy of Brahmo Samaj.[45] In reply to *Dayanand aur Unkā Nayā Mat,* Radhakishan Mehta wrote *Isrār-e-Brahmpanth* (1886), *Brahmo Samāj kī Asliyat* (1888) and *Arya Samāj aur Brahmo Samāj kī Tālīm* (1888) and *Subut-e-Tanāsukh* (1888). Durga Prasad authored *The Doctrine of Re-incornation* (1891). Swami Darshnanand published *Dev Samāj se Prashan* in Urdu, in 1921.

The ideological differences between Arya Samaj and Brahmo Samaj of Lahore were personalised by Shiv Narayan Agnihotri.[46] He initiated a paper-war against Arya Samaj and its founder in 1878 and produced several tracts such as *Pandit Dayanand Sarawati ke Veda Bhāsh par Review, Dayanandī Vedon mein Zinākārī kī Tālīm* (Lahore, 1888), *Pandit Dayanand Unveiled* (Lahore, 1891), *Dayanandi Kalyugi Mazhab* etc. The Aryas countered with their own publications, such as, *Shiv Narayan ki Shokhi kā Jawab* (Lahore, 1888), Pandit Murli Dhar's *Sat-Asat Parkāsh Yāni Satyanand Agnihotri ke Risālā Pandit Dayanand kā Sannyās kā Jawāb* (Lahore, 1890) and Durga Prasad's *A Reply to Mr. Agnihotri's "Dayanand Unveiled"* (Lahote, 1891).

Anand Swaroop (Saheb ji Maharaj), the Guru of Radha Swami sect, also wrote against *Satyārth Prakāsh* his book *Yathārth Prakāsh* in three volumes. In reply, Pandit Buddhdev Mirpuri wrote *Yathārth Prakāsh kī Haqīqat.* Master Lakshman Aryopadeshak authored (i) *Rādhā Swāmī Mat aur Vedic Dharm,* (ii) *Rādhā Swāmī Hawāī Mahal* (in Hindi and Urdu both), (iii) *Yathārth Prakāsh kī Haqīqat,* and several other books including *Bible kā Kachchā Chiṭṭhā* (Part-1), *Mūrtipūjā Khaṇḍana* and *Bhavishya Purāṇa kī Ālochanā.*

Paurāṇic Pandits Akhilanand Sharma, Kalu Ram, Jwala Prasad Misra, Baldev Prasad Misra and Bhawani Prasad published *Vedic Satyārth Prakāsh, Satyārth Prakāsh kī Chhichhāledar, Dayanandtimirbhāskar, Dharmdiwākar* and *Bhāskrābhās Niwāran* etc. respectively. Tulsiram Swami wrote *Bhāskarprakāsh* (*Dayanand Timirbhāskar kā Uttar*) in June 1897. *Diwākar Prakāsh* was written by his brother Chhutanlal Swami in reply to *Dharmdiwākar.* Dr. Ram Prakash authored '*Satyārth Prakāsh Vimarsh*' in reply to *Navjāgran kī Vichārdhārā, Satyārth Prakāsh: Samālochnā kā ek Prayās.*

Jain writers such as Ajit Kumar Shastri, Jiyalal Jaini and Thakardas Jaini published *Satyārth Darpan, Dayanand Chal Kapaṭ-Darpan* and *Dayanand Saraswati Mukhcapetikā* respectively. The contents of books like *Dayanand Rahasya* by Ramchandra Yakta, and in many cases their titles themselves, give a fair idea of the mentality, language and style of writing of their authors. Several books were written in reply to these titles, like *Dayanand-Siddhānt-Prakāsh* by Vaidyanath Shastri in response to Ajit Kumar's and Ramchandra Yakta's books. It was published by Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Delhi in 1966.

Before the advent of Rishi Dayanand, several books were written for and against Islam. There was a lot of unrest in the name of religion. To acquaint the Indians with Vedic Dharma and other prevalent sects, Swami Dayanand presented a critical analysis

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of their religious thoughts in his book *Satyārth Prakāsh.* Certain authors of international repute such as: H.G. Wells, George Bernard Shaw, Margoliouth, Sir William Muir, John Muchleisen Arnold, Lunt, C.R. North, Mahapandit Rahul Sankrityayan etc. have criticised Islam and its prophet in a much stronger language[47] than that used by Maharshi Dayanand.

Maulana Sanaullah Amritsari wrote *Haqprakāsh* in Urdu. It was replied to by Pandit Ramchandra Dehlavi and Pandit Chamupati through their books *Satyārth Prakāsh ke Chaturdash Sammullāsa mein Uddhṛt Qur'ān kī Āyaten* and *Chaudhahavin kā Chānd* respectively. In this context, Rajendra Jigyasu's books (i) *Qur'ān Veda kī Chhaun mein,* and (ii) *Qur'ān Satyārth Prakāsh ke Ālok mein* must be mentioned. Maulavi Mahesh Prasad wrote *Swami Dayanand aur Qur'ān,* (ii) *Bakar-Īd,* (iii) *Gau aur Qur'ān,* and (iv) *Islāmī Tyohār aur Utsav* etc.

Pandit Lekhram wrote a large number of books and tracts on various subjects. Some of them were to refute the ideology of Islam, Christianity and Ahmadiyya sect. Such books include (i) *Nuskhā-e-Khabta-e-Ahmadiyya* (written in reply to *Suramā-e-Chashmā Ariya*), (ii) *Taqjīb-e-Barāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya* (1891), (iii) *Risālā-e-Jihād yānī Dīn-e-Muhammadī kī Buniyād* (1892), (iv) *Tarq-e-Islām,* (v) *Abtāle-Bshārat-e-Ahmadiyya* (vi) *Radd-e-Khilat-e-Islām* (vii) *Christian Mat-Darpan* and (viii) *Āinā-e-Injīl.* Pandit Badridatta Sharma translated *Hujjtul Islām* (1897) in Hindi under the title *Yavanmat Samīkshā.*

Thakur Inder Verma wrote *Shamshīr-e-Shuddhi* in reply to Khwaja Hasan Nizami's book *Daiye-Islām.* Dharampal (Maulavi Abdul Ghafoor) wrote (i) *Tarq-Islām* (1903), (ii) *Yavanmat Parīkshā,* (iii) *Yavanmat Ādarsh,* and (iv) *Vishlatā,* part-1; *Islām kā Photo.* Dharm Bhikshu Luckhnavi was a scholar of Islam. His books (i) *Aslī Qur'ān,* (ii) *Kalām-ur-Rahmān Veda hain yā Qur'ān?* (iii) *Chashm-e-Qur'ān,* (iv) *Mirzā Qādiyānī ko Hamal,* (v) *Āsmānī Dulhin* and (vi) *Ajālā Ohām yāne Tahqīqāt-e-Islām* were popular. Pandit Satyadev (Maulana Gulam Haider) is the author of (i) *Arśasawāra* (It is the reply to Maulana Mohammad Ali's commentary of the word *ārsh* as given in English translation of *Qur'ān*), (ii) *Qur'ān mein Parivartan* (reply to *Jāmā Qur'ān* written by Maulana Muhammad Ali), (iii) *Afshā-e-Rāj,* (iv) *Nārā-e-Haidrī,* (v) *Qur'ān mein Tahrīf,* (vi) *Qur'ān mein Ikhtalāphāt,* 12 parts, (vii) *Islām kā Parichaya* (1928) and (viii) *Islāmī Dharmānusār Shristi-Uttpati* (1914). Pandit Murarilal Sharma wrote critical books such as (i) *Islāmī Tauhīd kā Namunā,* (ii) *Musalmāni ke Bānī kī Kahānī,* (iii) *Mazhab-e-Islām mein Science kī Garbar,* (iv) *Mazhab-e-Islām mein Sabhyatā kī Garbar* and (v) *Qur'ān kī Pol* etc. Pandit Bhojdatta Sharma Arya Musafir wrote (i) *Adam kā Lādum,* (ii) *Nārā-e-Haidrī,* (iii) *Tasbih Muhammadī,* (iv) *Nikāh-Niyoga,* (v) *Āsmānī Kitāb,* (vi) *Islām kī Aslī Tasvīr* and (vii) *Haiyāt Islām* etc. Another scholar of Arabic and Persian, Dev Prakash is well-known for his critical works on Islam. Some of his books are (i) *Khwāzā Husan Nizāmī kā Vāstvik Roop,* (ii) *Mirzā Gulām Ahmad Qādiyānī kī Bhavishyavānīyon kā Bhāndāphor* and (iii) *Qur'ān Parichaya* (3 parts) published in 1970, 1971 and 1973 respectively.

Pandit Kalicharan Sharma also wrote *Īsai Mat darpan.* Kahanchander Verma is the author of (i) *Is not Christianity a False and Fabulous Religion?* (1917), (ii) *Christ a Myth: The Historicity of Christ* and (iii) *The True Religion.* Pandit Shanti Prakash had a thorough study of Christianity. He wrote (i) *Īsāi Mat Pol Prakāsh* and (ii) *Īsāi Mat kī Vāstviktā.*

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Laltaprasad Yadav authored (i) *Bible kī Vidhvanskārī śikṣā* and (ii) *Īsāi Mat kā Kachchā Chiṭṭhā* (both in 1954). Pandit Dharmadev Vidyamartand wrote (i) *Bible mein Ishvara kā Swaroop* and (ii) *Christianity and the Vedas.* Om Prakash Tyagi has written several tracts against Christianity, untouchability and caste system by birth.

Mahatma Munshiram wrote *Muhammadī Sājish kā Inqshāf* in reply to Khwaza Hasan Nizami's book *Daiye-Islām.* He also wrote (i) *Pārsimat aur Vedicdharm,*[48] (ii) *Īsāi Pakshpāt aur Arya Samaj* and (iii) *A Challenge to the Christianity 36 Questions*[49] etc.

Sardar Arjun Singh, the grand-father of Shaheed Bhagat Singh wrote a well documented book *Hamāre Guru Sāhibān Vedon ke Pairo The.*[50] Shaheed Bhagat Singh's father, Sardar Kishan Singh has described in his book *Gurumaryādā* Part-1 (marriages of Gurus) that their marriages were performed according to the Vedic rituals. Both these books were written in Urdu. Swami Darshnanand,[51] Swami Rudranand,[52] Swami Swatantranand[53] and Swami Amritanand (Tara Chand Vanaprasthi)[54] have written well-researched books on Sikhism.

The Arya Samaj is firmly of the view that the Purāṇas were not authored by Vyāsa, Lala Munshiram wrote *Purāṇon kī Nāpāk Tālīm se Bacho* in 1899. Some of the important books written on 18 Purāṇas include (i) *Purāṇa Tatav-prakāsh* by Chimanlal Vaishya, (ii) *Purāṇa Pol-prakāsh,* (iii) *Paurāṇic Pope par Vedic Top* (both written by Mansaram Vedic 'Top'), (iv) *Purāṇa-mat-Paryālochan by* Acharya Ramdev, (v) *Paurāṇic Dambh par Vedic Bamb* by Dharmnarayan Sharma, (vi) *Paurānik Mat* by Gopal Singh Vidyavachaspati, (vii) *Ashṭadash Purāṇa Parishīlan* by Shivpujan Singh Kushwaha and (viii) *Paurānik Tīrth Mīmānsā* by J.P. Chaudhari Kavyatirth.

Swami Darshananand Saraswati[55] and Pandit Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya[56,57] have written a large number of books/tracts in support of Vedic ideology while analysing various sects.

Arya Samajist scholars have criticised the Paurāṇic beliefs. Amar Swami (Thakur Amar Singh) wrote books such as (i) *Aryā Siddhānt Sāgar,* (ii) *Jīvit Pitr,* (iii) *Hanumān ādi Vānar the yā Manushya?,* (iv) *Kyā Rāvan Vijayādashmī ko Mārā Gayā thā?* and (v) *Kyā Draupadī ke Pānch Pati The?* etc. The details of his Śāstrārthas with Paurāṇic Pandits have been complied in the book *Nirṇaya ke Tat par* (in five volumes). It has been published by Amar Swami Prakashan Vibhag, Ghaziabad.

A number of books have also been written in support of the Vedic principles and beliefs. Pandit Devdatta Shastri authored *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikendu-parāg* in 1950 Vikrami in reply to Mahant Brahmkushal Udasin's book *Ṛgādibhāshyabhūmikendu* written criticising *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā.* The book *Bhīmhṛdyāndhkārmārtand* part-1 was published in Samvat 1957. The view point of Bhimsen Etawa has been criticised in this book. Pandit Ghanshyam of Agra wrote *Bhūmikābhās* to criticise Swami Dayanand's *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā.* The criticism was replied to by Pandit Dvijendranath Shastri through his book *Bhūmikā Prakāsh.* Swami Karpatri authored *Vedārth Parijāt.* Some of its portions were replied to by Dr. Brahmanand Sharma in *Vedārth-Vimarsh.* The complete reply to Swami Karpatri's book was provided by Pandit Vishuddhanand Misra Shastri in 1984 in his book *Vedārth Kalpdrum* written in Sanskrit. It was translated into Hindi by his wife, Shrimati Nirmala Misra. Pandit Vishuddhanand was honoured by various

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organisations for this book. Pandit Shiv Shankar Kavyatirth is well known for his books (i) *Omkār Nirṇaya,* (ii) *Jāti Nirṇaya,* (iii) *Tridev Nirṇaya,* (iv) *Vedic Itihāsārth Nirṇaya* and (v) *Shrāddha Nirṇaya* etc. Mahatma Narayan Swami is the author of (i) *Pāpa-Puṇya,* (ii) *Mṛtyu Rahasya,* (iii) *Mṛtyu aur Parloka* and (iv) *Arya Siddhānt Vimarsh* etc. Ganeshprasad Sharma has explained the concept of *Īśvara, jīva* and *prakṛti* in his books. Pandit Bihari Lal has contradicted the alleged concept of animal killing in the Vedas by writing his book *Pashu Bali aur Veda.* Ramgopal Shastri is well known for his books (i) *Kyā Veda mein Āryon aur Ādivāsiyon ke Yuddh kā Varṇan Hain?* (2026 Vikrami), (ii) *Veda mein Arya-Dāss Yuddh Sambandhi Pāshchātya Mat kā Khaṇḍana* (2027 Vikrami) and (iii) *Veda ke Ākhyānon kā Yathārth Swaroop* (2029 Vikrami).

The criticism of Idol worship has been a popular subject with the Arya Samajist scholars. These inlcude the following books - Lekhram (*Mūrtiprakāsh,* 1888); Devi Dayal (*Risālā-e-Tardid-e-Dalail-e-But Prastī,* 1890); Durga Prasad (*Mūrti Pūjā Khaṇḍana,* 1891); Pandit Rajender of Atrauli (*Bhārat mein Mūrti-pūjā*); Buddhdev Mirpuri (*Mūrtipūjā Mīmānsā,* 1914 Vikrami); Pandit Bihari Lal Shastri (*Kyā Mūrtipūjā Vedokat hai?,* 2020 Vikrami); Swami Nityanand Brahmchari (*Mūrtipūjā,* 1905); Gyani Pindidas (*Mūrtipūjā Mat Khaṇḍana*); Umakant Upadhyaya (*Mūrtipūjā Samikshā*) and Dr. Bhawani Lal Bhartiya (*Mūrtipūjā ki Samikshā*). Gyani Pindidass has also authored (i) *Naveen Vedānt Khaṇḍana,* (ii) *Nāstikmat Khaṇḍana,* (iii) *Purāṇon aur Vāmamārg kā Ghanishaṭha Sambandh* and (iv) *Mahānirwān Tantra* etc. Pandit Rudardatta Sharma Sampadakacharya has written (i) *Swarg mein Subject Committee,* (ii) *Swarg mein Mahāsabhā,* (iii) *Aryamat Mārtand Nātak,* (iv) *Kaṇṭhī-jneyu kā Vivād* and (v) *Purāṇa Parīkshā* etc. in an interesting satirical style.

Several scholars have written books on social evils and problems to awaken the people. These include – *Mṛtak Shrāddha* by Swami Darshananand, *Avtārvāda kī Mīmānsā* by Pandit Buddhdev Mirpuri, *Satī Dāh: Ek Lom Harshak Prathā* by Shivpujan Singh Kushwaha, and *Satī Prathā Veda Viruddh* by Dr. Jwalant Kumar. The books such as (i) *Vidhvā Vivāh karo,* (ii) *Sārda Act,* and (iii) *Bāl Vivāh Nishedh Kānoon* by Kunwar Chandkaran and *Bāl Vivāh Nātak* by Chhutanlal Swami may be mentioned here.

The maximum number of books criticising non-Vedic sects and defending the Vedic principles and beliefs were written by Shivpujan Singh Kushwaha[58] and Dr. Shri Ram Arya[59] during the second half of the twentieth century.

The long and vibrant tradition of scholarly works by the Arya Samajists has formed a rich treasure-trove that the future scholars can dig into and discover many a respledant gem of information and Vedic wisdom.

(Acknowledgements: The author is grateful to Dr. Ram Prakash for his help.)

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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2. According to Swami Dayanand Saraswati all the four Vedas were revealed by God to the Rishis at the same time. However, some others believe that the Atharvaveda is a later addition to the first three and only the Ṛgveda is the oldest scripture known to man.
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16. *Ibid.*, 2007, Vol. XLI, part-I, pp. 1-14.
17. For detail see Acharya Darshneya Lokesh, *The Almanacs deviating from Vedic Seasons*, chapter 41, pp. 617-628.
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21. Aryamuni, 1918, *Nyāyryabhāshya*, Devdatta Sharma Shah Almi Darwajā, Lahore, p. 23.
22. Pandit Tulsiram Swami could complete the commentary of 25 sūtras of *Purva Mīmānsā* before his death in July 1915. The commentary on five Darśanas written by him was published in 1912. *Vedānta Darśana Bhāshya* was published through Swami Press Meerut.
23. Arya Samaj Katra, Allahabad has handed over the manuscript to Ganganath Jha Shodh Sansthan. However, the translation has not been published so far.
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44. Diwan Chand, 1965, *Mahatma Hans Raj*, Nanakchand Vazir Devi Trust, Kanpur.
45. Ram Prakash (Dr.) ed., 2013, *Works of Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi*, Ghaziabad, pp. 195-210.
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56. *Ibid.*, pp. 51-53.
57. Rajendra Jigyasu (Tr.), 2002, *Gangā-Gyān-Sāgar*, Swatantranand Shodh Sansthan, Abohar.
58. Shivpujan Singh Kushwaha (i) *Kyā Vedvyāsji Purāṇon ke Rachayitā The?;* (ii) *Nārad Purāṇa kā Ālochnātmak Adhyayan;* (iii) *Srimadbhagavatamahāpurāṇa mein Vyākaraṇa Sambandhi Ashudhiyān;* (iv) *Markaṇḍyepurāṇa;* (v) *Padam purāṇa kā Ālochnātmak Adhyayan;* (vi) *Shivlinga Pujā Paryālochan;* (vii) *Gargmukhchapetikā* etc.
59. Shri Ram Arya (i) *Purāṇa kisne Banāye;* (ii) *Srimadbhagavata Samikshā;* (iii) *Shivlinga Pooja Kyon?;* (iv) *Satyārth Prakāsh kī Chhichhāledar kā Uttar;* (v) *Madhvāchārya ko Dubble Uttar;* (vi) *Qur'ān Darpan;* (vii) *Qur'ān aur anya Majhab;* (viii) *Mariyam aur Īsā;* (ix) *Īsāimat kā Pol Khātā* etc.

(Translated from Hindi to English by Ram Prakash)

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# SECTION III
## Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Arya Samaj and the Indian Renaissance

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# CHAPTER 11

# Swami Dayanand: Understanding his Work of Reform, Renaissance and Nation-building

*K.C. Yadav*

Our historiography of the 19th century movements for socio-cultural reform, renaissance and political regeneration is sub-fused with either indiscriminate belauding or disdainful criticism of their leaders. Swami Dayanand Saraswati, the founder of the Arya Samaj, is an apt case in point. This has led to much mis-knowing about and misunderstanding of the great man, not only at the lay but even at the profounder level. In what follows, an endeavour has been made to portray him in colours true to history in order to understand the dynamics and complexities of his life, thought and work in particular, and a befogged but brilliant chapter of our history in general.

***Early Life***

Swami Dayanand was born in 1824 to Karshanji Tiwari at Tankara in the erstwhile state of Morvi in Gujarat in a well-heeled, orthodox Hindu Śaivite family. At five, the sapient boy began to study Devanagari characters at home, and his parents and elders, he says, 'commenced training him in the ways and practices of life'. He began to 'learn by rote many religious hymns, stanzas and commentaries'. After being invested with the 'sacred thread' (*yajñopavīta*), in 1831, he was given practical lessons of *Gāyatrī sandhyā* and taught the *Yajurveda Samhitā*. Later, he studied 'Sanskrit grammar, learnt some Vedic text by heart' and was initiated, according to the family tradition, in the worship of Shiva.[1]

In his 14th year, Dayanand was 'ordered' by his father to observe a fast on the occasion of *Shivarātrī* (1838) and participate in the night-long vigil in a Shiva temple. The obedient son carried out his father's order a little too seriously, and even when everyone else including his father, had fallen asleep in the last part of the night, the

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child-devotee remained fully awake to witness alone an event that shocked him: 'A mouse', he later recorded, 'came out of its hide-out and began to wander around the idol of Shiva. Not only that, it even climbed on the idol and ate away the *akshata* (offerings)'.[2] Surprised and shocked, he asked himself: 'How could the idol which allows the mouse to run over his body and thus suffer his image to be polluted without the slightest protest could be the omnipotent, living god – Shiva?'[3] The bugle against 'idol worship' was blared at full blast.

***A Sannyāsī with a Difference***

Dayanand was sharp, intelligent, solemn and sensitive, and had a passionate heart and an inquisitive mind. At the age of 22, he left his home, renounced the world, became a *sannyāsī* (ascetic) and severed all connections and relations with his family, caste, class or creed. Like Odysseus, he crisscrossed almost the entire country for 15 long years,[4] seeking to know in authentic terms about God, soul, life, death, purpose of living, salvation and so forth from learned guides and *gurus*. But so spiritually barren and intellectually sterile was this land then that, despite his nonpareil efforts, he could not find an usher 'with a critical enough approach to satisfy his exacting standards'[5] until 1860, when, by a stroke of chance, he ran into Swami Virjanand at Mathura, who in Romain Rolland's words, was an 'untameable and indomitable' blind *sannyāsī*.[6] Sitting at his feet for nearly three fruitful years, and drinking 'deep at the fountains of immortal learning', he perfected his knowledge of Sanskrit, literature and metaphysics, entered the world of ancient wisdom and found answers to almost all his embrangling questions.[7] He was now, in Aurobindo Ghosh's manner of speaking, a thinker but also a doer, a soul but also a man, a servant of God but also a master of nature.[8]

He was, in other words, a transformed man. It was *unsannyāsī-like*, he averred, to run away from the world. The real *dharma* of a *sannyāsī* was to make the world a better, happier and peaceful place to live. And having realised the truth thus, he started his crusade. The task was difficult – almost Herculean. But he was, in real life, no less than the legendary son of Zeus and Alcmene. Tall and erect (six-foot-one), with a robust body, topped by a round handsome face, fitted with a sharp nose and deep jet-black eyes,[9] with 'God in his soul, vision in his eyes, and power in his hands', he, 'granite himself, smote out a shape of things with great blows as in granite'.[10] He 'transfused into the languid body of India', his own formidable energy, his certainty, his lion's blood'[11] in order to effect her 'regeneration – religious, social, political and scientific'.[12]

***Work of Reform and Renaissance***

This suggests a couple of questions: How did Dayanand manage to do this capacious task? How did he comprehend its intricacies and complexities, especially when he did not know English, had no access to the European literature of renaissance and reformation and was absolutely unaware of the western discourse on freedom and liberty? How could he still compose a narrative of reform, renaissance and nation-building, much more scientific and superior to the anglicised narratives in circulation then?

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Let us take the call: Trekking over, almost the whole country on foot, Dayanand, a sensitive, earthy and organic intellectual, saw from the closest quarters his countrymen living a most wretched and inhuman life. He watched the priestly class, the orthodox Brahmanical hierarchy, exploiting the poor, the ignorant and the innocent. He noticed his people's blood on the colonial hands and their systematic loot, plunder and pillage by the state. And that was the source of his knowledge, the basis of his 'splendid dreams', the inspiration for his action and the material for his blueprint for the making of a free and vibrant modern Indian nation.[13]

He began his work very methodically. First, he put his own house in order. Martin Luther was convoked to Worms on the authority of a 'Papal Warrant' to explain his position vis-á-vis his heretical activities, but Dayanand himself went to Kashi, the headquarters of the orthodoxy, and assailed the monstrous excrescences that had degraded both Hinduism and India. On November 16, 1869 was held a monumental contest (at Kashi) in the presence of about 5,000 people: Dayanand, single-handed, on one side and three hundred learned and influential *pandits* of orthodox Hinduism, led by Swami Vishuddhanand, on the other. Ishwari Prasad Narain Singh, the ruler of Kashi, was in the chair; and the subject for disputation was whether the *Vedas* permitted idolatry. The orthodoxy proved to be a poor match to Dayanand's profound scholarship, clarity of thought and forceful arguments. But finding it impossible to overcome the great man (Dayanand) by regular discussions, the *pandits*, in the words of *The Hindu Patriot*, 'resorted to adoption of a sinister course to subserve their plans.' They raised pandemonium and their cheer-boys threw brickbats and stones on the victor.[14]

The incident neither disheartened nor disappointed Dayanand; rather he became more pushful and combative in his struggle against false beliefs and practices thereafter. With Vedas in hand, he challenged the Hindu orthodoxy to justify not only idol worship on their basis but even polytheism, pantheism, licentious rites, infanticide, infant marriages, taboo on sea-voyage and other degrading superstitions and atrocious excrescences they had been nurturing and nourishing for ages. He exhorted his people not to listen to the '*thugs*' but to God alone, and lead an honest life, following the path shown by '*āptas*, the persons of learning and piety'.[15] 'There were no places like *swarga* (heaven) and *narka* (hell), he counseled them. These are states of mind, which 'a person experiences on account of his deeds – enjoyment of special happiness and possessions of the means thereof (*swarga*) for good deeds, and sufferings and the means thereof (*narka*) for misdeeds'. About another false belief, i.e. *tīrthas* (sacred places of pilgrimage), created by the pandits, whom he contemptuously called *popes*, he posed that these were good works, such as speaking truth, acquisition of knowledge, company of the wise and the good practice of the *yamas* and (other stages) of *yoga*, life of activity, spreading knowledge for the good of the society. No places or rivers can be *tīrthas*'.[16] The vested interest came out in full force to check him. But his 'profound scholarship, sharp logic, and opportune hammerings' brought them to their knees.[17]

He attacked the evil of inflexible and intransigent birth-based hierarchical divide called caste and asked his people to follow in its place the old, time-tested *Varṇa* system based on four divisions or classes of society – Brahaman, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra,

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standing not on the accident of birth, but merit – competence (*guṇa*), capacity to work (*karma*) and nature and character (*svabhāva*) – where 'a Shudra, otherwise educated and honest, could become a Brahman, study the Vedas and put on the *yajñopavīta* (the sacred thread); and one born in a Brahma n, Kshatriya or a Vaishya family could become a Shudra'.[18] Much better than the caste system though, the (*Varṇa*) system elicited very little response from the people. But still it served a purpose – it relaxed the rigidity of caste system, and, more importantly, enervated the accursed practice of untouchability,[19] which even Mahatma Gandhi would appreciate: 'Among the many rich legacies that Swami Dayanand has left to us', the Mahatma said, 'his unequivocal pronouncement against untouchability is undoubtedly one'.[20]

Likewise, he brought to glaring light the suffering of womenfolk by highlighting their problems like low status in society, illiteracy, *purdāh* system, child marriage, polygamy, *satī*, forced widowhood, etc., which were oppressive to the body, injurious to the mind and deadly to the soul.[21] He specially castigated the vested interest oppressing and exploiting the widows and started a campaign not only for their remarriage, but also for guaranteeing a respectable life to them and their children, both legitimate and even illegitimate, by an Act of the Government to the effect 'that anyone trying to ignore their right in moveable and immovable property of their (children's) parents would be liable to punishment'. By this, he argued, 'I anticipate that the lives of thousands of children will be saved, abortions shall be minimised and remarriage of widows will thus be introduced at last'.[22]

He acclaimed for women equality, emancipation and good education, both general and specialised – Vedic, political and material.[23] Lila Munshi is absolutely right when she says that 'Dayanand was the first Indian to pronounce women as equal to men and try to place them on the higher planes of life'.[24]

Likewise, Dayanand also made a powerful attack on illiteracy, the source of most of the ills, sufferings, exploitation and backwardness of his people. He knew that the official 'filtration theory of education' in vogue then, which touched only the upper crust of the society, was of no use for the society at large. He, therefore, advocated a different scheme, which envisaged free and compulsory education for all. 'There should be a state legislation,' he observed, 'that nobody should keep his sons and daughters away from school after the fifth or at the most eighth year of age. Those who flout the order should be punished by the state,' he added. There should be no discrimination between the rich and the poor in schools – all students should be 'given proper attention, should be dressed alike, should eat alike, and live in the same style, irrespective of whether they are sons/daughters of the aristocrats and nobles or those of the poor'.[25]

As for the curriculum, he was of the view that 'it should be quite comprehensive, representing all branches of knowledge.' He put emphasis on learning as many languages as possible – our own as well as foreign (अपशब्द-ज्ञानपूर्वक शब्द ज्ञाने धर्मः). He told the chairman of an Arya school at Farrukhabad (U.P.):

> the English is being taught quite effectively everywhere by the Government of which this is the mother tongue. You need not contribute to its development;

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> nor can you do anything more worthwhile than the Government for it. Of course, Sanskrit, our own language, which is not supported by anyone today, needs your help... You should allot teaching hours (for languages) like this: out of 6 hours, give 3 hours for Sanskrit, 2 for English and 1 for Urdu and Persian.[26]

There should be equal emphasis on arts, science and technology. He encouraged the opening of employment-generating institutions. He wrote to his disciple, Rai Mulraj of Punjab:

> It is evident now that even educated people do not get service and they cannot find means for their subsistence. I, therefore, propose to start an industrial school. Every man (Arya Samajist) must contribute 1/100 part of his income (per month) for the proposed school... Those educated in this school will have to take a vow to serve the school/society for twelve years.[27]

Besides this, he was very keen that we should have higher knowledge and excel, as in the past, in mastering crafts and sciences. Writing again to Mulraj, he says: 'We must send some men to Germany for learning crafts and sciences. But of course, if this education can be had here in our own country then we may not send them to Germany'.[28]

Dayanand was perhaps the first man in the lengthy annals of Indian history, who 'democratised knowledge' and made the Vedas and other related ancient texts 'available in the spoken language of the people' – Hindi – and authorised the women, the 'depressed and the un-regenerate masses', who were hitherto forcibly kept away from them, to read them. I tend to agree with F.E. Harris, an eminent educationist, that such 'a bold invasion on the exclusive rights of the most ancient and powerful priesthood in the world' was not anybody's job. Though Gujarati was his mother-tongue and he had mastery over Sanskrit language, yet he opted for Hindi as the national language and asked his countrymen to adopt it as the language was spoken by and could be easily learnt by a huge majority of the people.[29]

Like illiteracy and all the humbug that went with it, another equally, if not more, wretched a thing that drew Dayanand's concern was poverty. Having found its real causes, he shared them with his people and advised them to eradicate the wrecking curse once and for all by opting for *swarāj* and *swadeshī*. He exhorted them to take a leaf out of the Englishmen's book. They devote, he said,

> their life, attention, and wealth to the welfare of their nation... They allow persons to go into their offices and shops with shoes on made in their country, but not if made in this country. It is enough to show you how much they respect even the shoes made in their country, but not the men of other countries.[30]

Turning towards the anglicised elite, he observed: 'It is now about a hundred years since they (Englishmen) came to this country, but they... have not given up the manners and customs of their country. But many of you imitate them. Senseless

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imitation does not become a man of understanding',[31] he said. They are not advanced because of their dress or their mannerism. They are advanced because they are doers. They are disciplined. They help each other: 'Such are the noble qualities and deeds which have brought about their advancement. They are not advanced by using coats, pantaloons, eating in hotels, and other ordinary evil habits'.[32] Dayanand's exhortations to this effect inspired people, as indicated elsewhere, to take to the *swadeshī* movement in a big way.

During his tours of the countryside Dayanand noticed, with anguish and annoyance, suffering of his people by the Government's unreasonable and erratic policy of taxation. About 56 years before Gandhiji, he challenged the propriety of their salt tax (*non kar*). Salt is necessary for everyone, he said, but it is the life-sustainer of the poor people. They cannot live without it. The tax is like a cruel punishment (*daṇḍa*) to them. Similarly, the tax on fuel wood, which the poor people use to cook their meals (*paun rotī*), is also painful, he said. The poor people roam about in the jungles day and night to collect the stuff. Taxing it tantamounts to causing them unbearable pain and suffering. He also criticised the judicial system which was biased against the poor in particular and every Indian in general. From stamp papers to everything relating to courts is expensive, he said: These sources of suffering of the poor must dry up.[33]

***Blueprint of Nation-building***

Dayanand's next, and perhaps the most important, concern was nation-building. The task was formidable. Dayanand, however, took it up intelligently and scientifically. Unlike his westernised predecessors and contemporaries, he believed that no country could build its national edifice on a foreign foundation. He, therefore, gave a clarion call to his countrymen to go back to the Vedas, 'India's rock for Ages', which and which alone were according to him, qualified to serve the purpose. He was right, as Aurobindo Ghosh attests: 'The Vedas were the original source of religion, culture and civilisation of India'; they were 'the foundations of Indian thought, philosophy and knowledge'; and they 'concealed in themselves the seed for a radical new birth of the Indian nation'.[34] And it is this element that gives meaning to Dayanand's pronouncement of the Vedas to be the 'divine word' – God's revelation, to be precise. Intricate as the matter is, let us visit Aurobindo Ghosh again:

> Dayanand was perfectly logical (in this matter)... There are always three fundamental entities which we have to admit and whose relations we have to know if we would understand existence at all, God, Nature and the Soul. If, as Dayanand held on strong enough grounds, the *Veda* reveals to us God, reveals to us the law of Nature, reveals to us the relations of the soul to God and Nature, what is it but a revelation of divine Truth? And if, as Dayanand held, it reveals them to us with a perfect truth, flawlessly, he might well hold it for an infallible Scripture. The rest is a question of the method of revelation, of the divine dealings with our race, of man's psychology and possibilities. Modern thought, affirming Nature and Law but denying God, denied also the possibility of revelation; but so also has it denied many things which a more modern thought is very busy reaffirming. We cannot

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> demand of a great mind that it shall make itself a slave to vulgarly received opinion or the transient dogmas of the hour; the very essence of its greatness is this, that it looks beyond, that it sees deeper.[35]

The mass of our people in those days was, owing to the conscience-breaking slavery of centuries, suffering from inferiority complex, depression and down-heartedness. To expect of them to be of any use in building their nation would have been akin to barking up the wrong tree. Dayanand, therefore, worked perspicaciously to get them out of their wretched condition. Like a good psychiatrist, he posed them searching questions: Why do you feel inferior to others? Why have you parted with your national pride and prestige? Why cannot you walk with heads erect and high? In the ancient times, India had 'no equal on earth', he said. The country was called '*swarṇabhūmi* (golden chersonese)'. It was a '*pārasmaṇi* (philosopher's stone), whose touch instantly turned the base metals of foreigners' poverty into gold'.[36] He narrated impassioned, though not always *Comme il faut,* historical happenings to substantiate his statements and inspirit his people. 'The Aryas were the Lord paramount over the whole world', he said, and 'the rulers of other lands acknowledged their suzerainty. There were their dependent rulers in other countries'. Now 'Europeans seem to be cultured and educated to you. But as a nation they are nowhere as compared to us'. We were once the 'world teacher': 'It was from India that knowledge, science, and art travelled to other lands of the world. They went first to Egypt, thence to Greece, thence to Rome and thence all over Europe, thence to America and so forth'.[37]

To be doubly sure that the arrow hit the bull's eye, he quoted the authorities of foreigners to convince them of the correctness of his stand. 'Jacolliat, a French scholar', he said, 'writes in his book, *The Bible in India,* that 'India is the fountain-head of all knowledge and morals, and all sciences and arts and religions have spread from this very land'. Not only that, 'he (Jacolliat) prays to God in the book that 'O Lord, may my country make as much progress as was made by ancient India'.[38]

But 'now on account of ill-luck, indolence, ignorance, negligence and internecine quarrels the country has lost her independent and peaceful rule. The people are lying prostrate at the feet of foreigners'.[39] And 'we will go on suffering like this', he cautioned,

> unless the evil customs be given up and good ones be adopted instead... The cause of foreign government is internal disunion, difference in religion, the disuse of the institution of chastity, the absence of the acquisition and impartation of knowledge, early marriage without the parties' approval, luxury, lying and other vices... When brothers fight with each other, a foreign third party sets itself up for an arbitrator.[40]

Restore your confidence and do away with the obnoxious foreign domination, he appealed. Go for *swarāj* (self-rule), because it is, verily, 'the best thing'[41]: 'A foreign rule, even if free from religious bigotry and race-prejudice, even if benevolent to the people like parents and endowed with mercy and justice, is not conducive to perfect peace and

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happiness'.[42] He enjoined upon every one of his followers to begin one's day with prayers based on Vedic mantras – a sort of divine command – which he collected and reproduced in a small, handy book, *Āryābhivinaya.* In most of the mantras there, a passionate appeal is made to God to grant freedom, liberty, good education, good conduct, good health, happiness, riches, strong army and so forth.[43]

Dayanand was in fact obsessed with freedom. Like the British philosopher Bertand Russell, he esteemed 'freedom as the basis of everything'. Even during the course of his religious discourses, he would often go out of the way, as Valentile Chirol has said, to rouse his people 'into active resistance to the alien influence'.[44] Sands, an informed intelligence officer (United Provinces), also thought the same way. He reported (1910) that Dayanand 'was first patriot and afterwards religious reformer'.[45] They were right. Here are some instances to prove the point. While discussing idol worship, he said:

> We depended on the idols for the defeat of our enemies and the triumph of our armies and therefore did not exert ourselves. The result was that we were defeated and the government of the country, independence and wealth with its attendant pleasures, fell to the lot of our enemies. We were robbed of our independence and reduced to the condition of the subject race, suffering in a hundred different ways like the pony of the baker and the donkey of the potter.[46]

At another place, condemning the worshippers of Lord Krishna's idols, he gave an illustration from 1857:

> When the English bombarded the temple (in Rewa Sadhol) with its images in V.S. 1914 (A.D. 1857), where were the images gone? However, the Baghers, showed great bravery in fighting and killing the enemy (English), but no image could do even so much as to break the leg of a fly. Had there been somebody like Shri Krishna, he would have discomfited them hip and thigh. Tell me why should his proteges be not beaten whose protector is whipped.[47]

Again, while preaching animal (cow) protection, he observed that 'ever since the carnivorous and intemperate foreigners, who slaughter the cows and other animals, have established their rule in the country, the miseries of the people have been steadily on the increase'.[48]

Criticising the taboo on sea-voyage imposed by the stick-in-the-mud priests, he brought in the same theme again. 'It is this tomfoolery of these ignorant people', he said, 'that has deprived us of our independence, ease, wealth, government, knowledge and courage'.[49]

Even his 'violent criticism' of different Hindu sects, directly and indirectly, seemed, and rightly, to Herbert Riseley, 'politically motivated', for, in his considered opinion, Dayanand knew that 'the flame of patriotic enthusiasm will not readily arise from the cold grey ashes of philosophic compromise and that before Hinduism can

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inspire an active sentiment of nationality, it will have to undergo a good deal of stiffening and consolidation'.[50]

His criticism of different religions, which many critics believe to have done more harm than good to the national cause by sparking communal controversies and disputes, was also, in fact, a step in this very direction – building the nation for securing *swarāj*. Complex as the matter is, let us bring in Dayanand himself here to explain his position and clear the air. 'In criticising different religions', he says, 'my objective is not to hurt the feelings of any person directly or indirectly',[51] but 'to highlight the truth, which is found in every religion and expose the untruth, which the vested interests have inserted there'. The latter, he adds, 'create differences in different faiths,... mislead the people and turn them into one another's enemy'. 'My purpose', he reiterates, 'is to help in putting an end to the mutual wranglings, to preach universal truths, to bring all men under one religion, so that they may, by ceasing to hate each other and firmly loving each other, live in peace, and work for their common welfare'.[52] There are, he says,

> learned men in all religions. If they give up prejudices, accept all those broad principles on which all religions are unanimous, reject differences and behave affectionately towards each other, much good will be done to the world. The differences of learned people aggravate the differences among the common masses with the result that miseries increase and happiness is lost.[53]

Whatever his critics might say, a critical, dispassionate look at the referenced literature shows that Dayanand is impartial and objective in his criticism of different religions. He is as unsparing of and harsh with Islam or Christianity as he is with Hinduism. He shows no leniency to the latter on account of its being his own, or that of his forefathers' religion? He says:

> Though I was born in Aryavarta (India) and still live in it... Yet just as I do not defend the falsehoods of the religions prevailing in this country but expose them fully... in like manner I deal with the religions of other countries and their supporters. I treat the foreigners in the same way as my own countrymen so far as the elevation of the human race is concerned. It behoves all men to act likewise.[54]

Interestingly, Dayanand did not let the important issue rest at the theoretical level alone. He tried to give it a practical shape so that mutual bickering and quarrels among different faiths came to naught. For instance, on the occasion of the Delhi Durbar, 1877, he invited a conference of the representatives of different faiths in India 'to discuss the matters of common interest'. The invitees were: Babu Navinchardra Roy, Babu Keshub Chandra Sen, Munshi Kanaiyalal Alakhdhari, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Munshi Indramani and Babu Harish Chandra.[55] Keshub Chandra Sen, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and Munshi Alakhdhari responded to the invitation. Though the conference led

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at that time to 'no practical result, it paved the way for the later religious parliaments and conferences working for peace and happiness of mankind'.[56]

Dayanand had, in sum, no malice or ill-feeling towards any religion. Though his language, tone or tenor being of his times, might seem scabrous and spiky to the present-day reader, and create a different impression. Similarly, the militantism and aggressiveness that strikes us in his behaviour might also seem somewhat offensive today. But that was, as Aurobindo Ghosh says, 'his strength of self definition'.[57] He was well-intentioned and even-handed. It was in fact the later vested interests in other religions and among Dayanand's own uninformed followers,[58] who actually started religious controversies and dragged him into them. We have strong first-hand evidence that wise and informed men of different faiths in his days liked him and appreciated his work.[59]

There is another point of criticism. For the reason of his clarion call given to his people 'to go back to the Vedas', some writers tag him as a back-looker and a revivalist. Far from it! Looking back, history tells us, is not always a revivalist exercise in absolute sense. The 'Renaissance in Europe' looked to Aristotle, 'Reformation' to the Bible, and 'the French Revolution to the republicanism of Hellas and Rome'.[60] As a matter of fact, 'to seize on a vital thing out of the past', Aurobindo Ghosh contextually says, 'and throw it into the stream of modern life, is really the most powerful means of renovation and new creation'.[61] He was no back-looker, but an exponent of 'democratic idealism', and a 'builder of modern India', free of servitude and slavery – religious, social and political.

## ESTABLISHMENT OF ARYA SAMAJ

In mid-1870s Dayanand thought of founding an organisation, as other reformers had done in Bengal, Maharashtra, etc. so that the work in one hand could be done with innumerable hands in a better institutionalised manner in his time as well as after him. He laid the foundation of the new organisation on April 10, 1875 at Bombay. He gave it 'a social and political quite as much, as a religious name' – Arya Samaj. It was a society of common people, not of God like the Brahmo Samaj or of gods (*devas*) as Dev Samaj, or a prayer society like Prārthnā Samaj.[62] 'Of the three', says the eminent historian D.R. Bhandarkar,

> Arya Samaj is by far the best name that could be invented... All the sacred scriptures of India whether of the Brāhmaṇs, Buddhists or Jains make mention of that word... And the Hindus have all along been styled Aryas, not only in writings but also in inscriptions'. It is 'the most beautiful word to conjure with. And we cannot but admire the inspired mood which prompted Swamiji to christen his movement, Arya Samaj.[63]

The saint-statesman threw open the gates of Arya Samaj for everyone, irrespective of caste, tribe, gender, creed, country or faith, provided he or she was willing to accept the authority of the Vedas and the ten principles.

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The Samaj got popular in no time. As many as 131 of its branches were established in the life-time of its founder himself. A large number of people joined the Samajs and took Dayanand's message of reform and blueprint of renaissance and nation-building to their respective locales and worked hard to make their society and country of his dreams.

In February 1883, Dayanand constituted another organisation called the Paropkarini Sabha. Its main aims and objectives were laid down by him as follows:

> The Sabha, as is at present and in time of difficulty does, according to the rules, take care of me and all my property and applies it to works of general good, so shall it continue to do after me, *viz.*, after my demise also, in like manner:
>
> (a) In the dissemination of the *Vedas, Vedāṅgas* and other like *Shāstras*, i.e. by fostering the commentary, study, teaching, hearing and propagation of these.
>
> (b) For teaching and preaching of Vedic Dharma, by organising a body of teachers and lecturers (*prachāraks*) to work in India and other countries, so that truth may be accepted and falsehood rejected.
>
> (c) For the providing of means and institutions for the protection, maintenance and right training of the orphans and the destitute of India.[64]

The Paropkarini Sabha was in a way meant to handle Dayanand's personal affairs, broadly his property, publication work and philanthropic activities. The Arya Samaj, on the other hand, had wider reach and scope and covered social, religious and political aspects of public life.

***Historical Re-evaluation***

A question may, as a matter of course, arise here: Where does Dayanand stand in the annals of the history of reform, renaissance and nation-building in the nineteenth century in comparison to others in the field? Regrettably, our mainstream history books, loaded with Eurocentric cant, are of no service. While the western-oriented reformers stand there in larger-than-life frames, Dayanand doesn't have more than a foot-note-hold. No doubt, the contribution of the westernised elite to the Indian life was corporeal, but indoctrinated by their Western counterparts, victims of the process of acculturation,[65] and steeped into parochial and class interests and always looking outside themselves for 'strength and inspiration', they made poor heralders of reformation, renaissance and *swarāj*.

Take, for example, the social field: The western-oriented elite launched an attack on superstitions, falsehood and bigotry in their society, but in their personal lives they could not practice what they preached. Even Rammohan Roy (1772-1883), that great reformer, was no exception. He observed caste regulations, and put the seal of legitimacy on the *Shaiva* marriage according to tantric rites, which was nothing less than concubinage.[66] He believed in polygamy and indulged in avoidably long litigations in courts with his own kiths and kins.[67] His compatriots like Prasanna Kumar Tagore (1801-1886) and Keshub Chandra Sen (1838-1884) were not any different. The former publically denounced idolatry in his journal, *The Reformer*, but himself performed *Durgā*

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*Pūjā* at his residence with usual pomp and show.[68] Keshub Chandra Sen, the crusader against the backward social customs of the Hindus like child marriage, etc. married off his own daughter, not yet 14, to a boy of less than 16.[69] What effect of the preachings of such reformers could have been in the socio-cultural domain can be guessed.[70]

In the political sphere, their performance was no better, if not worse. They did not mind the domination of India by a foreign power. His *abstract* love of liberty and other *crusades* notwithstanding, Rammohan Roy hailed the British rule as 'an act of Providence'. Considering it a national necessity, he said: 'Conquest is very rarely an evil when the conquering people are more civilised than the conquered, because the former bring to the latter the benefits of civilisation'.[71] Make it a permanent thing, said Keshub Chandra Sen, for 'this (Raj) is an instrument in the hands of Providence to elevate this degraded country in the scale of nations'.[72] Others from the 'class' behaved no better.

Even the sickening scene of the people's economic exploitation had no big effect on many of them. Rammohan Roy cared little for the agricultural peasantry,[73] 'the landless tillers, wage-earners and slaves'. He did not think that the causes like free trade, settlement of Europeans, and commercialisation of agriculture, which he advocated with such high degree of enthusiasm, would ultimately result in unemployment and misery to the millions in rural India'.[74] He had hardly any word of sympathy for his brethren whose blood was sucked day in and day out by the English indigo planters in his own province. He rather praised the exploiters instead: 'On the whole they (indigo planters) have performed more good to the generality of the natives of his country', he said, 'than another class of Europeans whether in or out of the services'. Flabbergasted, Dr. Majumdar says: 'Comment is superfluous, save to point out that there was at least one great Bengali who appreciated the noble service rendered by the indigo planters to benefit the hapless Bengal peasants'.[75]

The westernised leaders, had, in fact, neither the power nor the will to stand and check the rising tide of the western religion, culture and political domination. But Dayanand had. Romain Rolland has put it beautifully:

> It is a historic fact that when Dayanand's mind was in process of being formed, the highest religious spirit of India had been so weakened that the religious spirit of Europe threatened to extinguish its feeble flame without the satisfaction of substituting its own. The Brahmo Samaj was troubled by it, but was itself willy-nilly stamped with Western Christianity. Ram Mohan Roy's starting point had been Protestant Unitarian. Devendranath, although he denied it, had not the strength to prevent its intrusion into the Samaj, when he yielded the ascendancy to Keshab (Christian)... He (Dayanand) alone hurled the defiance of India against her invaders.[76]

As a matter of fact, these leaders belonged to a new middle class, whose material interests were served and multiplied by their contact with the British and, therefore, they could not attack the political and economic problems of their countrymen effectively. On the other hand, dichotomies and contradictions in their personal lives

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and public behaviour made them poor social reformers and wavery men of renaissance. Dayanand was, however, different from them. A *sannyāsī,* who had renounced the world, he neither longed for wealth nor hankered after fame. He had no kith or kin, community or class to care for or had any financial interest or investment to serve. He was a class by himself, as the following tingling words of Aurobindo Ghosh attest:

> Among the great company of remarkable figures that will appear to the eye of posterity at the head of the Indian Renaissance, one stands out by himself with the peculiar and solitary distinctness, one unique in his type as he is unique in his work. It is as if one were to walk for a long time amid a range of hills rising to a greater or lesser altitude, but all with sweeping contours, green-clad, flattering the eye even in their most bold and striking elevation. But amidst them all, one hill stands apart, piled up in sheer strength, a mass of bare and puissant granite, with verdure on its summit, a solitary pine jutting out into the blue, a great cascade of pure, vigorous and fertilising water gushing out from its strength as a very fountain of life and health to the valley. Such is the impression created on my mind by Dayanand.[77]

Dayanand died a premature death (of poisoning) on October 30, 1883. He knew that death being an inevitability in life would come sooner or later. He had therefore, built these two institutions, created a huge following and left behind a bulky corpus of his writings – 66 books (34 published), covering 24,000 foolscap pages – to inspire and guide them to do his work after him effectively.[78] I find no better words than those of Sir Jadunath Sarkar, the doyen of Indian historians, to conclude the essay:

> He is a true statesman who can legislate for the future, who can set the forces at work which will go on influencing the lives and thoughts of unborn generations. When the history of India's growth comes to be written that high rank will be adjudged to the naked fakir Dayanand Saraswati.[79]

Is the historian listening?

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*
4. see Mahesh Prasad, 2000 Vikrami, *Maharshi Dayanand: Kahān aur Kab,* Allahabad; *Maharshi kā apūrava Brāhmaṇ,* Allahabad, n.d; Dayanand, *Autobiography,* pp. 96-110.
5. Charles Hamisath, 1964, *Indian Nationalism and Social Reform,* Oxford, London, pp. 111-30.
6. For his life and work, see G.A. Natesan, *From Ramanand to Ram Tirth: Lives of the Saints of Northern India,* G.A. Natesan & Co., Madras, pp. 161-69; Devendranath Mukhopadhyaya, 1919, *Virjanand Charita* (Hindi tr. Ghasiram) Meerut. The best researched biography is Ram

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Prakash's, 2012, *Guru Virjananda Dandi (A grammarian par excellence)*, Satyarth Prakashan, Kurukshetra.

7. Dayanand, *Autobiography*, pp. 48-50.
8. Aurobindo Ghosh, 1940, *Bankim Tilak Dayanand*, Arya Publishing House, Calcutta, pp. 51-52.
9. The scholar-publicist G.A. Natesan has drawn, on the basis of *Vedic Magazine*, a beautiful pen-portrait of the impact of Dayanand's appearance on his audience thus: 'The curl of his lips, the turn of his nose, the brightness of his features, the nobleness of his bearing, the symmetry of his body which appeared to full advantage for want of a covering and diffused radiance over his face carried home to a bystander's mind the perfect innocence and stainless life of its possessor'. Natesan, *op.cit.*, p. 204.
10. Aurobindo Ghosh, *op. cit.*, p. 52.
11. Romain Rolland, 1928, *The Prophets of New India*, tr. E.F. Malcolm Smith, Castle and Co., London, pp. 97-110.
12. H.D. Griswold, 1936, a faculty at the Foreman Christian College, Lahore, has devoted a full chapter (X) in his book, *Insights into Modern Hindûism, Studies in Religion and Culture*, Holt, Reinhart and Winstonic, New York, to Swami Dayanand and his work of reform and regeneration.
13. *Cf.* Griswold's following statement: 'It is evident that Dayanand Saraswati was a man of large views. He was a dreamer of splendid dreams..., (and) may well be called the builder of modern India'. *Ibid.*
14. *The Hindu Patriot*, January 1870; also see *The Christian Intelligencer*, March 1870; *Rohilkhand Akhbār*, November 1869.
15. Dayanand, '*Swamantavyāmantavyaprakāsh*' appended to the second edition of his *magnum opus, Satyarth Prakash* (hereafter *Satyarth*), Eng. tr. Durga Prasad, Paropkarini Sabha, Ajmer.
    a. 'It was no small achievement', says Griswold, 'to found an indigenous theism, non-polytheistic and non-idolatrous, right in the very house of pantheism, polytheism, and idolatry, Griswold, *op.cit.*, p. 210.
16. Dayanand, *Swamantavyāmantavyaprakāsh.*
17. Dayanand, *Autobiography* (Editor's Introduction), pp. 3-9.
18. Dayanand, *Satyarth*, pp. 83-86.
19. For details see Harbilas Sarda (ed.), 1933, *Dayanand Commemoration Volume* (*hereafter Commemoration*), Paropkarini Sabha, Ajmer, specially the following write-ups: Rajratna Raja Ram, 'Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati on Untouchability', pp. 181-52; Bakshi Sohan Lal, 'Sri Swami Dayanand Saraswati on untouchability and uplift of depressed classes', pp. 189-91; Lal Chand, 'Dayanand and untouchability', p. 192.
20. *Ibid.*, p.1.
21. For details see *ibid*; also the following write-ups, Madan Mohan Seth, 'Swami Dayanand and Arya Samaj', pp. 281-82; R. Faridonji, 'Swami Dayanand and the position of Women in India', pp. 291-92; Romain Rolland, *Dayanand Saraswati* in Sharda, *Commemoration*, pp. 326-28.
22. Dayanand to Mulraj, Meerut, July 27, 1880, *vide Rishi Dayanand ke Patra aur Vijñāpan* (*hereafter letters*), ed. Bhagavaddatta, Ramlal Kapur Trust, Amritsar, p. 207.
23. For details, see Dayanand, *Satyarth*, pp. 39-40, 72-74, 93-94.
24. See Sarda, *Commemoration*, p. 48.
25. See Dayanand, *Satyarth*, pp. 39-40, 64-75.
26. Dayanand to Nirbhey Ram, Ajmer, May 23, 1881, *Letters*, pp. 290-91.
27. Dayanand to Mulraj, Agra, November 20, 1880, *Letters*, p. 259.
28. Dayanand to Mulraj, Meerut, August 10, 1880, *Letters*, p. 216.
29. F.E. Harris, '*Swami Dayanand Saraswati as a Social Reformer*' in Sharda, *Commemoration*, pp. 33-34.

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30. Dayanand, *Satyarth*, p. 374.
31. *Ibid.*
32. *Ibid.*
33. Dayanand, *Satyarth Prakash*, First edn. pp. 284-85, 87.
34. Aurobindo Ghosh, *op.cit.*, p. 52.
35. *Ibid.*, pp. 70-71.
36. Dayanand, *Satyarth*, p. 269.
37. *Ibid.*, pp. 270-271.
38. *Ibid.* p. 272.
39. *Ibid.*, pp. 221, 270.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 260.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 221.
42. *Ibid.*
43. Dayanand, 1972, *Āryābhivinaya* (Eng. tr. Swami Bhumanand), Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Bahalgarh, pp. 33-34, 79, 122, 143-144, 150, 180-81, 214-15, 238-48, 303-8, 327-29, 393-95.
44. Valentine Chirol, 1914, *The Indian Unrest*, Macmillian, London, p. 110.
45. Cited in B.B. Majumdar, 1934, *History of Political Thought from Raja Rammohan Roy to Dayanand*, Calcutta, p. 248.
46. Sands, *op.cit.*, p. 9.
47. Dayanand, *Satyarth*, chapter xi, p. 319.
48. *Ibid.*, pp. 261-62.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 258.
50. Herbert Riseley, 1915, *The People of India*, W. Thacker & Co., London, p. 280.
51. Dayanand, *Satyarth*, Introduction, pp. 1-6.
52. *Ibid.*
53. *Ibid.*
54. *Ibid.*
55. Satyadev Vidyalankar, 1946, *Rāshtravādi Dayanand* (hereafter *Dayanand*), Marwari Publication, Delhi, reprint, p. 84.
56. See Haridas Bhattacharya (ed.), 1956, *The Cultural Heritage of India*, Rama Krishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta, vol. 4, p. 635.
57. That was the language of disputations, etc. in those times, and 'a part of his self-definition'. Aurobindo Ghosh, *op. cit.*, p. 51.
58. Dayanand, *Satyarth*, p. 76.
59. The following tributes paid to him by his eminent contemporaries from different religions, which he criticised, prove the point. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, the great leader of the Muslims, said: 'Besides being a learned scholar, he (Dayanand) was a man of distinctly noble and spiritual nature... I was very well acquainted with the late Swami Dayanand Saraswati and I always showed great respect to him, simply because he was such an excellent and learned man that it behoved men of all religions to respect him, no matter to what religion they belonged. He was in any case such a great man that he has no equal in India'. (*Aligarh Institute Gazette*, vol. XVIII, No. 79, November 6, 1883, p. 1268, *vide* Harbilas Sarda, 1968, *Life of Swami Dayanand Saraswati*, Paropkarini Sabha, Ajmer, p. 600). A.O. Hume, the founder of the Indian National Congress and an opponent of Dayanand, held him in high esteem. 'All must admit', said he, 'that he was a great and a good man, an honour to his country he so dearly loved' (*vide ibid*). C.F. Andrews, the well known Christian leader, spoke of him almost in a similar vein: 'Swami Dayanand... was actually superior to the age in which we now live... Men could see in him, in his spiritual earnestness, his heroic character, his austere mode of life, his high ideals, the Vedic times themselves restored... The personality of the great Swami... in all the glowing majesty of his heroic spirit was so magnetic, virile, so passionately

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sincere and brave that others caught his inspiration before he died and carried on his message in his spirit'. *Vide ibid.*, pp. 597-98.

60. See V.P. Verma, 1961, *Modern Indian Political Thought,* Lakshmi Narain Agrawal, Agra, pp. 50-74.
61. Aurobindo Ghosh, *op.cit.* pp. 53-54.
a. Chakravarti Rajgopalachari has also spoken of Dayanand's what is called 'looking back' to the past almost in the similar vein: 'Through merciless chopping off', he says, 'he made the ancient forest habitable for modern life.' See Sarda, *Commemoration*, p. 18.
62. Griswold, *op.cit.*, p. 23.
63. D.R. Bhandarkar, '*Arya Samaj*' in Sarda, *Commemoration*, p. 126.
64. See Dayanand, *Autobiography*, pp. 75-79.
65. The process of 'interaction between two societies by which the culture of the society in subordinate position is drastically modified to conform to the culture of the dominant society'. See E.A. Hoebel, 1958, *Man in the Primitive World*, MacGraw-Hill, New York, p. 643.
66. For details, see R.C. Majumdar, 1972, *On Rammohan Roy,* The Asiatic Society, Calcutta, pp. 40-49.
67. See Amiya P. Sen, 2002, *Rammohan Roy: A critical Biography*, Penguin, Delhi, p. 36 for bigamy and pp. 47-48 for legal battles with his kins. Over the outcome of a case with his cousin in Roy's favour, Roy's mother, Tarini Devi, got so upset that she left her home and lived at Puri 'like an ascetic, rather than bear the indignity of defeat and material dependence (on Roy)'.
68. A.F.S. Khan, 1965, *Social Ideas and Social Change in Bengal*, E.J. Brill, Leiden, pp. 26-51.
69. *Ibid.*
70. Take, for instance, the impact of Rammohan Roy on social life in Bengal in respect of idolatry. 'There is hardly anything to his credit', says R.C. Majumdar, 'which changed the foundations of the Banga Samaj. Take idolatory: The story of his impact is writ large in blazing letters upon the illuminated gates of two thousand Durga pūjā *pandālas* in Calcutta whose loud speakers, and *dhaks* or trumpets proclaim in deafening noise, year after year, the failure of Rammohan Roy to make the slightest impression from his point of view on 99.9 per cent of the vast Hindu Samaj either in the 19th or in the 20th century.' Majumdar, *op.cit.*, pp. 40-49.
71. See *ibid.*, p. 47; Arbinda Poddar, 1970, *Renaissance in Bengal,* Indian Institute of Advance Study, Shimla, pp. 61-62.
72. Keshub Chandra Sen, *vide* K.C. Sen, 1901, *Lectures in India*, Cassel & Co., vol. I, pp. 323-24.
73. See S.C. Sarkar (ed.), 1965, *Rammohan Roy on Indian Economy,* Calcutta, pp. I-IV.
74. See R.S. Sharma (ed.), 1974, *Indian Society: Historical probings,* ICHR (spon.), New Delhi, p. 387.
75. R.C. Majumdar, *op.cit.*, p. 47.
76. Romain Rolland, *The Prophets of New India,* pp. 97-110.
77. Aurobindo Ghosh, *op.cit.*, p. 46.
78. See *ibid.*, pp. 108-112.
79. Jadunath Sarkar, '*Swami Dayanand Saraswati*' in Sarda, *Commemoration,* p. 9.

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# CHAPTER 12

# Arya Samaj and Socio-Religious Reform: Accounts of a Forgotten Struggle

*Rajendra Jigyasu*

A river, pristine at its source, in its course through populated areas, gradually gets polluted with the confluence of drains and rivulets. The origin and development of a religion runs precisely the same trajectory. With the passage of time, fake literature descanted the *Vedic Dharma* so much that it almost lost its identity. It got fragmented into various beliefs leading to the oblivion of its original form. Many undesirable practices gained currency in its name. The interpretation of the Vedas became erroneous. A large segment of the population (Shudras and women) was debarred from their study. The country, where *Yatra nāryastu pūjyante ramante tatra devatāḥ*[1] had once been the guiding principle, was plagued with child marriage, polygamy, *satī*, *devadāsīs*, and blind faiths. The influence of caste system tore the social fabric apart. Whatever remained of *dharma* was destroyed by idol worship and belief in multiple gods. An erroneous belief that an incarnation of God will rectify *adharma*, further weakened the possibilities of societal reform.

### *Societal Reform*

Rishi Dayanand waged a fierce struggle for uprooting the malpractices and for the all-round reform of society. He gave a classical basis to social and religious reform and his followers made numerous sacrifices for the cause. Dissensions were created on the basis of one's birth and all this was done in the name of protecting tradition, faith and religion. Swami Dayanand in the course of his travels for propagation of religion accepted food from Manjhi in Garhmukteshwar (1867) and from the ostracised farm labourer Sukhwasilal of Sadh caste, he partook *Karhī-Bhāt*. This was viewed by the caste Brahmans as shocking and anti-dharma. To this, the Rishi said, food is unacceptable for three reasons. If the undesirable stuff is meat or liquor or ill gotten food earned

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through sinful means and third if it is cooked in an unhygienic manner. This food has none of these impurities.[2] Therefore, what wrong have I done by accepting this food?

Inspired by the message of the Rishi and his persona, his followers waged a historic battle against untouchability. Hindus had gone to the extent of depriving the people from their own faith from chanting and listening to Veda mantras.[3] The question of allowing people from other faiths to listen to, study or adopt Vedic Dharma did not arise.

After listening to Dayanand's discourse at Dehradun in 1879 one Mohammed Umar expressed a desire to follow the Vedic Dharma. After centuries, Indians were witness to an alien to Hinduism converting to Vedic Dharma. The Rishi named him Alakhdhari.[4] According to Swamiji, every individual should have the right to choose his path to the devotion of the Lord without fear or financial temptation. It is not a question of conversion but of freedom of thought. Thus, Rishi Dayanand opened the doors of Vedic Dharma to all. At Roorkee, when a Sikh from the scheduled castes, took courage to listen to the religious discourse, a postman by the name of Munir Khan created a hue and cry. He almost got ready to rough him up. The Rishi was very hurt. He asserted very politely said there was no harm in his being there, and it should not be objected to. In *Karnawas* area and in Amritsar district many down-trodden devotees and a *Dhuniyā* would come to listen to his discourse. The Rishi spoke to them very cordially, even encouraging them to ask questions.

The old mother of an Arya family in *Rahon* Tehsil in Jalandhar district died in 1890. There was only one male member in the house – her son Chiranjilal. After listening to Swami Dayanand at Ludhiana, he had converted to Arya Samaj. Because he had refuted blind faith, the people from his clan refused to carry the dead body of his mother. Finding no pall bearer, he had to put it in a bundle and carry it on his back to the cremation ground.

A young man from Gujranwala who enthusiastically took part in Arya Samaj's activities was punished by his father, who refused to finance his studies. The teenager suffered the ordeal and left home. However, very soon the father realised his mistake. He met Late Gangaram and agreed that his son had done no wrong and so requested him to advise the boy to return home.

***Women's Education***

Despite stiff opposition, Arya Samaj established many educational institutions for women. At that point of time, there was no significant centre of women's education. The Indian rulers were content with keeping people illiterate. In the twentieth century, Maharaja of Patiala was not permitting the Arya Samaj to open a boys' school at Bhathinda. Mahashay Krishna of Dainik Pratap wrote a lead article titled, 'Maharaja's Patiala - the enemy of intellect'. During the life time of the Rishi, a school was established for orphan girls at the Ferozepur orphanage. Maharana Sajjan Singh (Udaipur), the then President, Paropkarni Sabha, Ajmer gave liberal financial assistance for this.[5] Pressurised by the traditionalists, Pandit Bhanu Dutt was forced to side with the opponents of Dayanand but after seeing the organisation of education in the orphanage, he profusely praised Arya Samaj for this constructive work.[6]

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In July, 1891 when Mahatma Munshiram, Lala Devraj and his friends established a Kanya Vidyalaya at Jalandhar, they were met with stiff opposition: Even after great effort, only five girls took admission in the Vidyalaya. One of them was Mahatma Munshiram's own daughter Ved Kumari. There was vicious propaganda in the whole city that upon being educated, the girls would write letters to their husbands, which in those days, was considered a shameful act. To encourage female education, Arya Samaj made a public announcement that all girls who went to school would be given four *ānnās* (quarter of a rupee) and a veil (*dupattā*). In those days four *ānnās* was a big amount. Even then, only girls from Arya Samajist families got into the school. Rai Bahadur Mulraj wrote against the Vidyalaya, to which Mahatma Munshiram gave a befitting reply in *Saddharm Prachārak*. In due course of time, this Vidyalaya found acceptance in the whole country. Girls came even from Maharashtra. The wives of Chaudhary Charan Singh and Prakash Singh Badal were the students of this Vidyalaya. While on one hand there was opposition, on the other hand donations came from all over the country.

Several Arya Samajists in the country established Kanya Pathashālās. Starting with Amritsar, Lahore, Jalandhar and Ferozepur, this movement spread to the whole country.

***Devadāsīs***

Sometime around 1926 Shivaram Karanth, the famous Kannada writer wrote to Gandhiji regarding the uplift of *devadāsīs*. The reply that they should lead a moral life, agitated Karanth. He held that every *devadāsī* cannot have an 'ideal' character like Gandhiji. Out of disappointment, Karanth posed the same question to Swami Shraddhanand. Giving shastras and Smritis as the basis, Swamiji asked Indra Vidyavachaspati to send a reply that if a *devadāsī* wants to get married, the society should help her.[7]

Even in the year 1964, Shorapur (Karnataka) had a bad reputation because of the *devadāsī* malpractice. Through the good offices of the Arya Samaj President Ram Chandra Verma, a young man (son of a *devadāsī*) received education and became a teacher, helping his family come out of the system of *devadāsīs*.

The poor from backward castes had to spend a life of ignominy because of the custom of *Ḍolā Pālkī* in what is present day Uttarakhand. History is witness that Arya Samaj had to wage a long struggle for its eradication. The credit goes to Thakur Mashal Singh, a veteran Arya Samajist, who got the legislation passed in 1928 in the Council to prevent hill women from flesh trade.[8]

***Marital Reform***

Arya Samaj waged a bitter struggle against polygamy and ill-matched marriages in the face of opposition. However, C.S. Ranga Aiyar profusely praised Arya Samajists for their conviction and struggle against these malpractices.[9]

After the martyrdom of Rishi Dayanand, an old Seth from Ludhiana, with several grandchildren, had made full arrangements for his marriage with a young girl of 14 or 15 years. Many were scandalised, but lacked the courage to oppose this marriage. Some

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Arya missionaries requested Chiranjilal Pehalwan to have this mismatched marriage stopped. He tried to persuade the Seth, but in vain. He made a complaint to the police, which too expressed its helplessness. He then went to the Seth's house and tried to reason with him. When reason did not prevail, he abused him for wanting to marry a girl of his grand-daughter's age. This led to a quarrel, and many visitors pounced upon Chiranjilal. In the scuffle, Chiranjilal lost a tooth and started bleeding, staining his clothes. Chiranjilal knew that just for breaking a tooth, the punishment was six months. He tore his *kurtā* himself, went back to the police, and showed his torn clothes and the bleeding tooth. The police came and rounded up a few people for the offence. The bridegroom and ten others were arrested, and the marriage had to be called off.

Rishi Dayanand established Arya Samaj at Bombay in 1875. After that many prominent people married their children outside their castes. Mahatma Munshiram (Swami Shraddhanand) was the first person to marry his children out of caste, resisting stiff opposition. Later, Arya Samaj leader Choudhry Rambhuj Dutt married a Bengali girl Sarla, from the family of Rabindranath Tagore.

Thakur Shiv Rattan from Patoor City of Maharashtra broke the shackles of caste and married his daughter to Lawyer Vishnu Dutt. But he had to leave Maharashtra and migrate to Punjab. M.G. Sharma, an Arya youth from Bijnor, revolted against the deep caste prejudice in Tamilnadu, and created history by marrying a Dalit girl. People from the Megh community were weavers, and the traditionalists considered them untouchables. A young Megh from Sialkot (now in Pakistan) heard the lecture of Swami Dayanand, became an Arya Samaj worker and devoted himself to social reform.

Jamini, the Arya Samaj Pracharak, did inter-caste marriages for his highly educated children. Arya Samaj leader Sheshrao Vaghmare, the son of a freedom fighter, fixed his sister's marriage with a low caste boy. Vaghmare's own mother was so annoyed that she beat him up with a shoe in full public view at the market-place.[10]

Sumitra Devi, an educated widow, had converted from Christianity to being an Arya. Munshiram married Sumitra to an educated youth Dr. Guru Dutt in the compound of his Jalandhar house. It was 1896. This almost caused an earthquake. Even in Mahatmaji's own family, there was opposition to the marriage, and his children were deprived of the affection of their real maternal family.[11] Bhai Bansilal, Swami Shraddhanand, Acharya Bhadra Sen, Pandit Dharmadeva Vidyamartand, Pandit Ganga Prasad Retd. Judge and Pandit Narendra did commendable work in this regard.

***Widow Re-marriage***

Traditional Hindus have written books against widow re-marriage while the Arya Samajists have written in its favour.[12] In the latter half of the twentieth century, Pandit Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya made tireless efforts to create awareness about widow re-marriage, but to no avail. Upadhyayaji did not lose courage. When his younger brother Satyavrat became of marriageable age, he persuaded his wife and aged parents to Satyavrat's marriage to a widow. He also got the parents of the young widow to fall in line. As soon as the marriage was solemnised, there was commotion in their society. The Kulshreshta Kayasthas convened a meeting to ostracise the Upadhyaya family and the *Bārātīs*. Representing Sanatan Dharm Sabha were Jwala Prasad Misra (Muradabad)

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and Pandit Akhilanand, and Indu Verma from Arya Samaj. Kunwar Yashyoraj Singh the grandson of Raja Dilsukh Rai of Kasganj was to preside over the meeting, but did not reach in time. The courageous and committed Aryas promptly proposed the name of one Amulyarattan Arya for presiding over the meeting. And then a resolution was passed to congratulate Satyavrat for the courageous act of marrying a widow. The meeting of the Kulshreshta Kayasthas was later re-convened, and was presided over by the Maharaja's brother. This meeting lasted for three days. The family and *Bārātīs* were ostracised from the community, and a resolution was passed to sever relations with Satyavrat. It was further decided that within six months, those *Bārātīs* who break ties with Satyavrat, would be forgiven. Only one *Bārātī* apologised. He was Upadhyayaji's real brother-in-law, Lakshmi Narayan.[13]

In the concluding years of the nineteenth century, a young man from Meerut took courage to marry a child widow. Anti-reformists from the Agrawal clan threatened the bridegroom and his supporters, but were unsuccessful in preventing the marriage. After the marriage took place, the anti-reformists had only one weapon – excommunication. All those who participated in the wedding were asked to apologise or face excommunication. Nobody obliged. One of these young men was Ghasiram who later became famous as Pandit Ghasiram.

Protests against the reforms, also led to many an amusing incident. At Talwandi Sabo (near Bhathinda), an Arya youth picked up the courage to marry a widow. Arya Samaj solemnised this marriage with Vedic rituals, but the traditionalists of the town made the life of the youth Nigahi Ram, hell. The couple had to settle permanently at Rama Mandi. In those days, the only means of travel in the area were camels. Things were settled with a camel owner who took the couple to Rama Mandi after taking the fee. Then the orthodox people of Talwandi Sabo unanimously decided that no devout Hindu would travel by his camel. For some time, the excommunication affected his business. Later, on there was much talk of 'the Arya Samajist camel' far and wide. Many people started coming to Talwandi to see the camel. In the eyes of the reformists, the camel became a hero. The business of his owner flourished. The family members of Nigahi Ram live at Bhathinda, till date.[14]

There are many stories of the abandoning of a village well that further highlight the extent of social discrimination. At the beginning of twentieth century, the Multan Arya Samaj started a practice of community lunches for those converting from Islam and Christianity. Such initiatives of the Arya Samaj irritated the orthodox Hindus. For one such community lunch, the water was taken from a public well. The anti-reformists could not prevent this but ordained that the Hindus would not take water from the well. Today such incidents may seem amusing but there was a time when only a chosen few took to such protests.[15] It was also common to oppose the use of wells by the Dalits.

***Purdāh***

Purdāh custom was so prevalent that when Arya marriages took place without it, a massive crowd would collect out of curiosity. A crowd had gathered to witness the marriage of Sardar Kishan Singh (the father of Shaheed Bhagat Singh). There was

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much novelty in that marriage as Sardar Kishan Singh himself recited the marriage mantras along with the Pandit.[16]

The Aryas opposed *Ghuṅghat* and consequently faced much mud-slinging. The Bombay based Professor Ishwar Chander Darshnacharya was considered a profound scholar of Indian philosophical thought and Madan Mohan Malviya had once remarked that a Pandit should be like him. He decided to do away with all unnecessary rituals in his marriage, and a huge crowd collected to witness the ceremony, managing which became a great problem for the girl's side. A marriage ceremony without Purdāh (veil)! What could be worse! The traditionalists could not do anything, but one of the spectators watching the ceremony from above threw a cat on the bride. Even such an inauspicious act could not stop the wedding.[17]

***The Uplift of Dalits***

In state of Jammu Kashmir, an Arya Samajist activist Ramchander was beaten so mercilessly with sticks on January 14, 1923 that he died at the Jammu Hospital on January 20.[18] His only 'crime' was that he was struggling for the restoration of the social and religious rights of the Dalits in general and the Meghs in particular. His colleagues including Pandit Bhagat Ram (Sialkot) and Pandit Hira Nand were also beaten up for establishing schools for the Dalits. Pandit Hira Nand is the same person who once threw bricks and dust on Swami Dayanand at Kashi, but later became his disciple. Karamchand a very close associate of Ramchander was told by his orthodox father, "Either you dissociate from the work of uplift of Dalits started by the Aryas or get out of my house." Karamchand left the house for good and did not return, even when invited. The skin of another Arya Samajist was burnt with red hot sickle making the sign of *Yajñopavīta*. He was told, "We have given you this permanent *Yajñopavīta*. Keep it!"

The Rajputs of Ramani village near Behrampur in district Gurdaspur forced the Dalits to take off their *Yajñopavīts*. When they protested and said that it was the symbol of Hindu Dharma given to them by the Arya Samajists, they were beaten up with sticks. The *Yajñopavīta* sign was carved out on the body of Gauri Ram, a Dalit. A Dalit woman of village Bahamani was beaten so mercilessly by a Rajput on October 7, 1929 that she had to be carried home on a cot. There are innumerable instances of this kind. The news of such cases was mostly carried by the weeklies and dailies run by the Arya Samajists. The stories of atrocities recorded by Dr. Ambedkar are accounts of the struggle of the Arya Samajists. In a town named Naraingarh in Indore State in 1938, Meghraj had to pay with his life for restoring the religious rights of the Dalits. In Haryana, Chamars and other low castes were not permitted to take water from the public wells. To get them the access to the well, Bhagat Phul Singh undertook a fast unto death in August 1942 at Narnaund. To get him to break his fast, Seth Jugal Kishore Birla and Gandhian Viyogi Hari came to Narnaund. But, Bhagat Phul Singh broke his fast only after twenty-four days when all his demands were met.[19]

Pandit Lekhram was employed at the Swabi Police station, now in Pakistan. The Thanedar used to address the sweeper Bishan Singh who was a Mazhabi Sikh in contemptuous tones, but Pandit Lekhram used to shake hands with him and bid him Namaste. In the field of the uplift of Dalits, the services of Lala Lajpat Rai, Lala

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Gangaram (Sialkot), Ch. Rambhaj Dutt (Dinanagar), Lala Devichand (Hoshiarpur), Gangaram (Muzaffargarh), Mehta Jaimini (Multan-Lyallpur area), Dr. Satya Prakash (Allahabad) and others are not to be forgotten. Pandit Sudhakar who was from a Brahman family in Karnataka adopted a Dalit boy and made him so capable that he retired as the Chief Secretary of the State. At Baroda, Master Atmaram Amritsari did a lot for the education of Dalits. His wife used to cook herself for the Dalit children. C.Y. Chintamani, the editor of the Leader (Allahabad) once wrote, "Where there is work to do there one does not miss the Arya Samaj."[20]

***Religious Rights***

The women and Shudras were denied the right to study the Vedas and wear the *Yajñopavīta* for several centuries.[21] Rishi Dayanand restored these rights to them. Maharshi Dayanand visited Karnawas several times during the initial years of his public life. There he would preach Gāyatrī jāp, Sandhyā and Havan Yajña to all sections of the society. A ninety year old deeply religious non-Brahman woman, Hansa Thakuraine, expressed the desire for a *darshan* of the Rishi and to listen to his discourse. Swamiji encouraged her to do Gāyatrī jāp.

Pandit Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya organised the *Yajñopavīta Sanskār* of his wife, Kalavati in 1904 at Bijnor. All the prominent Arya Samajists of Bijnor participated in the ceremony, but Babu Dharnidhar Das Engineer did not join in spite of being a committed Arya Samajist. He was a Bengali Kayastha, and considered *Yajñopavīta* for women unsuitable. Interestingly, he himself was the President of Arya Samaj and Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya was the Secretary. Years later in 1917, the *Yajñopavīta* sanskār of the learned Chandravati was done by Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya. She later became a writer of repute and a Member of Parliament.

***Varṇa according to Karma***

Acharyas from various Hindu sects had religious discussions (Shāstrārthas) among themselves. They were all Brahmans by birth, as it was unthinkable that any non-Brahman could discuss and debate religious matters. For the first time in the history of India by the grace of Dayanand, a Rajput Rao Bahadur Singh (Masuda) organised a discussion on the teachings of Bible and Gita, providing an impetus to social reform. Four years after the sad demise of Swami Dayanand, Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi, a disciple of Swamiji entered into a Shāstrārtha with Gauri Shankar, a Brahman by birth, in the garden of Langekhan at Multan. In the history of social reform and religious propagation, Pandit Guru Datta was the first scholar who was non-Brahman by birth but took part in Shāstrārthas. There is a long list of scholars in his tradition, who were non-Brahmans by birth, and took part in shāstrārthas. This list includes Swami Shraddhanand, Indra Vidyavachaspati, Swami Yogenderpal, Swami Swatantranand, Swami Rudranand, Ramchander Dehlavi, Dharm Bhikshu, Chiranjilal Prem, Thakur Inder Verma, Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya, Shanti Prakash, Dhramdev Vidyamartand, Ch. Khub Singh, Narendra Hyderabadi, Thakur Amar Singh, Om Prakash Khatoli, Manohar Lal Shaheed, Uttam Chand Sharar, Mansa Ram Vedic Tope, and Acharya Chamupati.

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Arya Samaj deserves credit for producing religious leaders who were non-Brahmans. No other religious organisation was led by a non-Brahman. This was not only a religious change but a social revolution as well, and it produced far reaching political results. Wherever the Arya Samaj was established in Punjab, U.P. and Rajasthan etc. non-Brahman leaders came up in large number in the religious, social and political spheres. These include Guru Datta Vidyarthi, Mahatma Munshiram, Lajpat Rai, Madan Singh, Jivan Das, Hansraj, Master Durga Prasad, Swami Swatantranand, Acharya Ramdev. Mahatma Narayan Swami, Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya, Ganga Prasad (Tihri), Ghasiram, Ch. Hukam Singh, Principal Mahendra Pratap, Ramchandra Dehlavi, Tau Chandu Lal, Narendra, and Ghanshyam Singh Gupt.

There is a long history of reform activities carried out by the Arya Samajists who were farmers, shopkeepers, office babus, bhajanopadeshaks, upadeshaks and sannyasis. For example, the Arya Samaj at Malomahe in district Sialkot of Punjab was, no doubt, a small unit but its contribution in the uplift of Dalits and the eradication of untouchability was remarkable. However, in the beginning of 20th century, the Arya Samajists faced social boycott for such reforms. The Arya Samajists of Ropar were boycotted in 1900 for the *shuddhi* of Rehatiyas. Even the barbers and the water carriers refused to serve them. They were not allowed to fetch water from any well, and were forced to fetch drinking water from the nearby river. The mother of an Arya Samaj leader, Somnath, fell ill due to the non-availability of clean water. Her condition was deteriorating day by day, and the doctors advised that she could be saved if she was given dirt-free clean water. But the opponents said, "Let Somnath and his fellow Arya Samajists beg pardon, and only then the boycott will be lifted." The mother and the son refused to yield and apologise and the brave old lady passed away.[22]

***Vedoddhār***

Arya Samaj has done unforgettable work for revival of the Vedas. Max Müller and other European scholars had translated the Vedas to help the conversion of Indians to Christianity and to turn them into the admirers of the British rule. They got help in their mission from Sāyaṇa and other commentators. The Vedas which preached unity to human beings were described as the songs of shepherds. The westerns called the Veda mantras meaningless and insipid. Rishi Dayanand gave the correct interpretation of the Vedas on the basis of knowledge received from Guru Virjanand Dandi. The Vedic words were not taken as *rurhi* but *yaugika* and translated keeping in view, their context. His Vedabhāshya gave a new direction to other scholars. Maulana Akhlak Husain in his book 'Vedic Dharma and Islam' and Ghulam Jailani have praised Rishi Dayanand profusely for this contribution.[23]

Over time, several foreign scholars have admitted that the European scholars distorted the meaning of the Veda mantras to suit their designs. However, the Vedas had survived the various onslaughts. A.C. Bose rightly observes:

> "Equally surprising is the fact that the Vedic religion should have survived through these thousands of years in spite of great social and political upheavals and terrific onslaughts on it from age to age. A consideration of these onslaughts

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and of the reaction of the religion to them may throw some light on its inner power."[24] He claimed, "In their purity, austerity and power, the Vedic hymns have appeared to me like fresh, clear streams gushing out of a rocky mountain."[25]

Dr. Radhakumad Mookerji stated, "The first point of distinction is that the Veda and especially the primordial work known as the Rigved, represents not merely the dawn of culture but also its zenith. Indian thought is seen at its highest in the Rigved."[26]

A highly significant contribution of Swami Dayanand is that he freed the Vedas from the monopoly of the caste Brahmans and made them the property of every section of the society. It was after thousands of years that the non-Brahmans started writing commentaries on the Vedas. After Swamiji, Mahamahopadhyaya Aryamuni and Guru Datta Vidyarthi became the Vedabhāshyakāras. 'The Terminology of the Vedas' written by Guru Datta was recommended as a text book for the students of Oxford University. The Vedic scholars Dharmdev, Acharya Priya Vrata, Swami Swatantranand, Ganga Prasad of Tihri, Vaidyanath Shastri, Acharya Ram Nath, Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya, Mahatma Narayan Swami, Swami Satya Prakash, Acharya Prajñā Devi, Swami Shraddhanand, Indra Vidyavachaspati, Bhagavaddatta, Madan Mohan Vidyasagar, Acharya Sudarshan Dev (Rohtak), Acharya Udaiveer, Shiv Kumar Shastri, Master Atmaram Amritsari, Acharya Bhadarsen (Ajmer), Satyavrat Siddhantalankar, Master Durga Prasad, Shankar Dev (Gujarat) and Vidya Nidhi were all non-Brahmans by birth. And so are Satyanand Vedavagish and Prof. Tulsi Ram. Many of them were adorned with the title of Pandit because of their scholarship. It was a religious revolution. Arya Samaj can be proud of its services in this regard. K.P. Jayaswal has rightly observed:

> The present reformed and rejuvenated Hinduism is solely a gift of Dayanand Saraswati... He has a high place amongst the modern liberators of mankind. In the nineteenth century there was nowhere else such a powerful teacher of monotheism, such a preacher of the unity of man, such a successful crusader against capitalism in spirituality.[27]

Swami Dayanand declared that the Vedas are the books of true knowledge and this knowledge is for one and all irrespective of caste, colour, gender etc. He traced the roots of the Dharma to the Vedas and thus re-established the Dharma in its original pure form. He gave humanity a chance to avail of that Supreme Dharma.

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# CHAPTER 13

# From Reform to Revolt: Situating Arya Samaj in India's Struggle for Swarāj

*K.C. Yadav*

Much is found in print on Arya Samaj as a religious, cultural and social reform movement,[1] but, surprisingly, there is very little on its contribution to the Indian renaissance, political regeneration and struggle for freedom from the British bondage,[2] which is in no way less impressive and eminent. Marred by this near, if not total, absence, the discourse on the Samaj and its work remains in a way incomplete. The present paper seeks to supply, albeit briefly, the desideratum.

## ESTABLISHMENT OF ARYA SAMAJ

On April 10, 1875 Swami Dayanand Saraswati (1824-1883) founded the Arya Samaj at Bombay. It was, says the eminent historian D.R. Bhandarkar, a society of common people, not of God like the Brahmo Samaj or of *devas* as Dev Samaj, or a prayer society like Prārthnā Samaj.[3] 'Of the three, Arya Samaj is by far the best name that could be invented. It cannot but appeal to the imagination of the Hindus... We cannot but admire the inspired mood which prompted Swamiji to christen his movement, Arya Samaj.[4]

Dayanand threw open the gates of the newly created organisation for everyone, irrespective of caste, class, gender, creed, country or faith.[5] The following rules defined its structure and governed its functioning:

> There shall be in each province a principal Samaj, of which the others shall be branches... Those people who are truthful, upright, and have good moral character and good of the world at heart shall be enlisted as members of the Samaj... Decisions of the Samaj shall be made with justice and careful

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consideration for the good of one and all... The president and other members (duly elected) shall do their utmost to promote the Arya Samaj, the schools run by it and its periodical, and the Arya Samaj fund.[6]

In a short span of time, about 134 branches of the Samaj were established in the lifetime of the founder – 74 in U.P., 35 in Punjab, 8 in Rajasthan, 8 in Central Province (M.P.), 4 in Bihar, 2 in Maharashtra, and one each in Karnataka, Bengal and Assam.[7] After his death, more branches came up. By 1910, it is reported that their number had gone up to 690. In the following three decades, the rise was really phenomenal – so much so that by 1947, they touched the 2,000 mark. There was also a sharp rise in their membership. In the 1891–1901 decade, the growth was, for instance, 131 per cent. The pace became still faster in the following decades. By 1947, the Samaj had over two-million members on its rolls.[8] In that era of hectic public activity, the Aryas worked, surprisingly, like 'possessed persons'. The following couplet was almost on every one's tongue in those days:

दयानन्द के वीर सैनिक बनेंगे, दयानन्द का काम पूरा करेंगे।

(We will become Dayanand's soldiers, and complete the (unfinished) work of Dayanand).

## THE POLITICAL LEGACY

What was Dayanand's work which his followers avowed to complete? It was a huge work, covering multiple spheres of life – religious, social, educational, cultural, economic, political and so forth. But concerned as we are here with just one aspect of it, i.e. political, especially the struggle for *swarāj*, I would like to understand it in a bit detailed manner.

Dayanand, a great patriot and lover of *swadeshī*, freedom and liberty himself, appealed to his followers to spare no effort to get *swarāj*. To his great surprise, however, he found his countrymen out-of-form, demoralised and depressed to make any such effort. Therefore, he then appealed to their self respect. What is it that makes you ashamed of calling yourselves Indians? 'This country, called Aryavarta, in old time, is so excellent that it has no equal on the earth',[9] he observed, and narrated impassioned, historical episodes to substantiate his statements: 'We were, once upon a time, world-teachers', he observed. 'All education that has spread in the world sprang originally from India. Then it went to Egypt, from there to Greece, from Greece to Rome and then to Europe. From Europe it went to America and other countries'.[10] Earlier we were rich and happy, 'now misfortune has overshadowed the descendants of the world-teachers'. They are 'down-trodden under the heels of foreigners'.[11]

He made a forceful plea for *swadeshī* and *swarāj*, i.e. political independence of the country. 'The swarāj is always the best thing', he said: 'A foreign government could not be beneficial even when it was free from religious bias, race prejudice and was just and sympathetic'.[12] In a religious garb, he gave, of course in his own way, an open message of an all-out revolt against the British Raj. Instances:

> Let no man abide by the law drawn by men ignorant of the Vedas.[13]

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> A man should use all his influence and power to destroy a sovereign who does not happen to be acquainted with the intricacies of the Vedas.[14]

> A King should have seven or eight good, righteous, and intelligent ministers well conversant with the Vedas born in *swadesh* and *swarājya*.[15]

These statements, said the Chief Public Prosecutor in the Arya Samaj Sedition Case, Patiala, 1910, 'read as political speeches made by Tilak or Bipin Chandra Pal at a meeting or conference, except that they go further than any one dare go in lecturing to the public'.[16]

This way, Dayanand inculcated in his followers the love of freedom, *swadeshī*[17] and pride of their country.[18] He filled them with patriotic fervour. Small wonder then, a large number of them took to the freedom struggle in a big way after him.

## THE STRUGGLE

The subject is a little difficult and problematic, especially on account of vastness of its spread and scantiness of sources. And, unfortunately, the bad patch does not end there. Bluntly put, the poverty of historiography of our struggle for *swarāj*, and inadequate yield of standard, competent and comprehensive studies on its different springs and streams as a result thereof, is another difficulty. In the circumstances, the present study cannot claim to be, honestly, anything other than an interim report.

Before narrating the account, however, two pertinent points may be apprised: One: the Arya Samaj was not, as indicated above, evenly spread throughout the country. It had a strong presence in Punjab, Haryana and parts of Uttar Pradesh (then United Provinces), Bihar, Madhya Pradesh (then Central Provinces) and Rajasthan (then Rajputana) and, to a lesser extent, in Maharashtra and Gujarat (then Bombay). The Samaj's role in the struggle for *swarāj* in these states (then provinces) was, and had to be, naturally, in correspondence to its presence there. It was, for instance, colossal in Punjab and Haryana, but from modest to limited elsewhere. Two: the nature of the Samaj's participation was also not uniform in all the movements: The Samaj took part directly, as a body, in the *Swadeshī* Movement and in the Satyagraha against the Nizam of Hyderabad in 1939, but in three other movements, namely the Peasant Movement, Punjab (1907), the Congress Movements (1885-1947), and the Revolutionary Movement (1907-1947), the Arya Samajists (hereafter Aryas) took part only as individuals, and not Samaj as a body, for reasons given below, under the aegis of different organisations/ parties.

## SWADESHĪ MOVEMENT

The first presence of the Arya Samaj in the national struggle for *swarāj* is seen in the *swadeshī* movement. About 30 years before the movement had its strong apparition in Bengal (1905), Swami Dayanand preached *swadeshī*, advocated boycott of foreign goods and exhorted people to take to *swadeshī* trading, *swadeshī* industry and go for their own courts (*pañchāyats*) and schools.[19] The exhortations had a positive impact. The Aryas

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took up the work as their master's own, almost everywhere – of course, in varying measures.

The task was relatively easy in the villages, where about 90 percent of the people lived. The rural folk, as we know, used clothes made by the village *julāhās* (weavers), ate *swadeshī* things, and kept simple *swadeshī* furniture in their houses. The *pañchāyats* still served a majority of them in so far as dispensing of justice was concerned. Very few people went to the British courts.[20] In the towns and cities, however, the situation was different, especially among the upper middle classes. They aped the western ways of life and used foreign goods.[21] The Samaj worked hard and took wise measures to overcome the problem.

Punjab became the first laboratory to test the novel phenomenon. The Arya Samaj, Lahore (established 1877) played a leading role here. Its members took a vow to use *swadeshī* things. They subscribed a few hundred rupees and ordered *swadeshī* cloth made at Bombay and kept it in the Arya Samaj Mandir for sale. Surprisingly, the consignment was sold sooner than expected.[22] Similar things happened in several other towns and cities. In 1894, Mulraj, the then President of the Lahore Samaj, and a close associate and follower of Swami Dayanand, and his friends like Jaisi Ram, Lal Chand, Murlidhar, et. al. formed at Lahore an organisation called the *Swadeshī Vastu Prachāriṇī Sabhā* (Society for the propagation of *swadeshī* goods). It had its following in almost all the big towns and cities of Punjab and Haryana, and some other places outside Punjab. In February 1896, the *Sabha* started a bilingual paper, *Swadeshī Vastu Prachārk* in English and Hindi. The paper, as expected, did some useful work, especially by exposing the 'frauds of free trade', etc. It criticised the current system of education and encouraged 'new education' based on technical and industrial knowledge.[23]

In October 1905, when the work of the above association got dull and dim, owing to passing away of some of its leading lights, another star appeared on the swadeshī sky – the *Punjab Swadeshī Association.* Lala Lajpat Rai, who had now shifted from Hisar to Lahore, was its president. The Association did a real good job. The Arya Samaj journals and magazines helped it in a big way. As a result, the movement spread outside Punjab and Haryana as well. C.E.W. Sands, Director of Intelligence, U.P., has given a district-wise account of the important events relating to the *swadeshī* movement in his province in his well-known report on Arya Samaj.[24]

The Arya *upadeshaks* from Punjab, Haryana and U.P. went to other provinces, especially, Bihar, Bengal, Madhya Pradesh (Central Provinces) to spread the message of *swadeshī* and boycott. As a result, not only the stretch but the scope of the movement also widened. It now covered beside *swadeshī* cloth, food, furniture, *swadeshī* industry, banking and trade as well.[25] They opened *swadeshī* educational institutions – D.A.V. Schools and Colleges and Gurukulas – for imparting national education and, most importantly, for infusing the love of *matṛbhūmi* (motherland) and the spirit of self-sacrifice in the students. In short, they sowed a good crop of patriots and freedom fighters.

After the founding of the Congress (1885), the Arya delegates from Punjab advocated the inclusion of issue of *swadeshī* and boycott (of foreign goods) in the party's official business year after year. But the Congress, surprisingly, did not evince any

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meaningful interest in it in its initial days. This annoyed the Aryas so much that they did not participate in the Congress sessions in 1902 and 1903.[26] However, they kept the movement going in their respective places of influence successfully.[27] After 1919, when Mahatma Gandhi came at the helm of affairs of the nation and made *swadeshī* an important part of his struggle for *swarāj,* the Aryas served as active *swadeshī* volunteers in Northern India during all the Gandhian movements from 'Non-cooperation' to 'Quit India'.

## GOVERNMENT HOSTILITY

The Government, it seems, did not take any serious note of the *swadeshī* and other patriotic activities of the Arya Samaj for about a decade. But in 1880s, they came to realise that the Samaj was a dangerous organisation. The Christian missionaries seem to have played a major role in the change of perception. It was some time in 1883 that a document prepared 'under their influence', charged Arya Samaj of harbouring political tendencies aimed at subversion of British rule'.[28] In the years to come, such voices got louder. The climax was, however, reached five years later, in 1888, when Bishop Parker of the American Methodist Mission, 'an authority' on the subject, wrote to the Government that, 'from all the talk, private and public, that I have heard, I am convinced that the Aryas are taking the place of the Irishmen, and are bound to go against the Government'.[29] The Samaj got wind of the developments and tried to clear the air: The Arya Samaj is a social and religious organisation, they said, and has nothing to do with politics.[30]

This raises a question: Was the Arya Samaj really a non-political organisation? The answer is both yes and no. The Arya Samaj leadership at that time came mainly from the urban middle classes, most of whom depended, directly or indirectly, on the Government for their well-being. As such, they could not afford to oppose the Government. Hence the cry from house-tops that the Samaj was a non-political organisation and that it was loyal to the Government. The Punjab Arya Samaj, for instance, declared, officially, that 'Politics is beyond the scope of the Arya Samaj (1886)'.[31] Dr. Gokul Chand Narang, one of its leading members, justified the thinking on the ground of 'security of life and property and religious neutrality enjoy (ed) under *pax Britannica*'.[32] The Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, U.P. also took a similar stand. It put a new rule in its bye-laws that 'No Arya Samaj shall, as a body, have any direct or indirect connection with any political agitation or movement or take any part therein' (1888).[33]

That was the official view – of Samaj's loyal leadership, to be precise – at that time. But the leaders alone did not constitute the Samaj. A mass movement as it was, the masses were equally, if not more, important. Most of them were deeply influenced by their master, the *sannyāsī*-statesman Swami Dayanand and his love of swarāj. When their pro-Government middle class leadership asked them not to go anywhere near politics and be loyal to the Government, they refused to obey it. They listened to their master instead. The Arya Press[34] and their educational institutions, the Gurukula Kangri and the students and teachers of the D.A.V. College, Lahore,[35] also did the same.

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The thinking of the Government officials that the Arya Samaj had for itself a political programme of national emancipation was, thus, not altogether baseless. Their belief was further strengthened in 1907 when they confronted the so-called 'Punjab disturbances' and had on their hands an 1857-like situation.

## THE PEASANT AGITATION, PUNJAB

There was a serious peasant agitation in 1905[36] over some agrarian measures in Central Punjab. It was led by young middle class urban elite, mostly Arya Samajists. Sir Denzil Ibbetson, the Lieutenant-Governor, was thus, not wide of the mark when he reported to his chief, the Viceroy, that 'I regard the present political situation in the Punjab as exceedingly serious, and exceedingly dangerous!' The Arya Samaj is behind 'the whole mischief', he added.[37] In his view, the only way to check 'the deluge' was to deport the leading lights of the Samaj, Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh. That would, besides making the Samaj bereft of effective leadership, also strike terror in the hearts of the Arya rank-and-file.[38] The Viceroy agreed with him. Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh were arrested and removed to Mandalay. A reign of State terror was let loose. People were arrested and harassed even on trivial 'suspicion'. There was a threat to close the Arya Samaj institutions and even put a sort of ban on the Samaj activities.[39]

This unnerved the older Punjab Arya leadership. They went to the Lieutenant-Governor, showed him *Satyarth Prakash* (to neutralise the propaganda that 'it was a book of sedition' and that Aryas drew inspiration from it), and professed loyalty. An eminent writer from Haryana, Babu Balmukand Gupt, drew (1907) an interesting portrait of the whole affair in a famous (satirical) poem, entitled 'loyalty'. He said:

सबके सब पंजाबी अब हैं लायलटी में चकनाचूर,
सारा ही पंजाब देश बन जाने को है लायलपूर ।
....
धर्म-समाजी पक्के लायल, लायल है अखबारे आम,
दयानंदियों को तो है लायलटी से ही काम तमाम ।
लायल लाला हंसराज है, लायल लाला रोशनलाल,
लायलटी ही जिनका सुर है, लायलटी ही जिनकी ताल ।
पोथी लेकर इन्हें पड़ी, अपनी लायलटी दिखलाना,
लाट इबटसन देंगे उनको लायलटी का परवाना।[40]

Despite all this, the Lieutenant-Governor was not convinced. I have been told, he said, 'by nearly every district magistrate that wherever there was Arya Samaj, it was the centre of seditious talk'.[41] Consequently, the Government struck at the Samaj in a number of ways: Aryas were debarred from entering government services. A close watch was kept on the activities of those Aryas who were already in services. Many Arya editors and printers were punished. The Arya institutions, more especially, the D.A.V. College, Lahore was given strict warning that it would be closed if they did not mend their ways. Canons were positioned in front of the gate of the college to instil fear in the hearts of

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the teachers and students.[42] This unnerved the D.A.V. Management and the Pradeshik Sabha that managed it so much that they removed Lajpat Rai from D.A.V. Management and Executive Committee of the Arya Pradeshik Pratinidhi Sabha.[43] They reiterated (May, 23 1907) that 'Arya Samaj has always been, and is, a non-political body... and declares that it has no connection of any kind with any political body or with any political agitation in any shape'.[44] Some leaders were highly critical of such unbecoming behaviour of the Samaj.[45]

Like the D.A.V. College, Lahore (Punjab), another educational institution in Haridwar (U.P.), Gurukula Kangri also appeared on the hit list of the (U.P.) Government. Their intelligence agencies made 'thorough probes' and reached the conclusion that 'the Gurukula was indeed preparing ground for sedition'. The Government contemplated its closure. Mahatma Munshiram, the founder-chief of the institution, who had infinite confidence in British justice and fair dealings and was loyally disposed towards the Government then,[46] spared no pains to prove his loyal *bona fides* and innocence of his institution. He was successful. The clouds were cleared off. Many British officials from the Viceroy to the lower bureaucrats visited the Gurukula and gave 'good conduct' testimonials. But that did not change the reality. The nationalist teachers continued to infuse their students with patriotic spirit and fervour, which produced a host of social activists and freedom fighters. After 1919, Mahatma Munshiram (Swami Shraddhanand) also became, as seen below, 'a rebel against the Raj'.[47]

## ARYA SAMAJ AND CONGRESS

The Indian National Congress was founded 10 years after the founding of Arya Samaj – in 1885, to be precise – at Mumbai (then Bombay). The Arya Samajists, as indicated above, joined the Congress and played a significant role in the struggle for *swarāj* under its aegis – but not everywhere throughout the country, and not all the time from 1885 through 1947. Their participation differed from state to state according to their demographic position. In other words, it was significant in Haryana, Punjab, and parts of Uttar Pradesh, but ordinary elsewhere. Another factor that counted was the nature, spread and scope of the movements that the Congress organised from time to time. For instance, prior to 1919 when the movement did not have a broad base, the scale of participation was small, but later, when Mahatma Gandhi came at the helm and it became a mass movement, the participation became profound, as the following account would show.

Haryana territory,[48] located in close proximity of Delhi, with overwhelming Hindu majority, was the first entrant into the Arya Samaj in Northern India. The Samaj was very popular there among the dominant agriculturist castes, which occupied an important space in life – except in the social sphere, where the priests had categorised them as Shudras – touchable Shudras, to be precise. The Samaj challenged this 'false' stratification and put them on a higher pedestal – of Kshatriyas – according to merit. Consequently, they joined Samaj almost *en masse*.[49] And once there, and getting good

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doses of patriotism and spirit of service most of the while, their joining the Congress was a foregone conclusion.

The Aryas not only provided a large following to the Congress, but also gave effective leadership. Babu Murlidhar (1848-1922), an eminent Arya Samaj leader from Ambala, was one of the 73 'greats' from different provinces of India, who founded the Congress, in 1885.[50] Later, he, along with his friends and associates, mostly Aryas, played an important role in creating a strong chain of Congress branches, covering most of the cities and towns, from 1886 to 1918[51] and a little later, even villages in central Haryana and parts of other districts.[52] Under their leadership, the Aryas took prominent part in almost every movement launched by Congress.

In the first ever all India movement, namely the non-cooperation movement, 1920-22, the Arya participation was unrivalled – literally. They were in fact electrified after Swami Shraddhanand, the tallest leader of the Samaj at that time, joined the movement and assumed leadership of the entire region surrounding Delhi. They spared no effort to make the movement a success, not only in Haryana but also in Delhi, as we will see later. Their show was far better than that of their counterparts in the better placed parts of Punjab,[53] of which Haryana was, administratively, a part then. Similarly, in other movements, the Civil Disobedience Movement, 1930-1934,[54] the Individual Satyagraha, 1941,[55] and the Quit India Movement, 1942,[56] they made a far better contribution than others in and outside the region. They formed by a rough estimate, over 88 per cent of the *satyāgrahīs* in the struggle.[57] There is, thus, truth in what people say that the Congress without Aryas in Haryana during the period under study would have been like a sitar without strings.

Unlike Haryana, where the relation between the Aryas and Congress was constantly steady, it was irregular and erratic in Punjab. In the beginning, for instance, the Aryas were least interested in the Congress because of its dominance by their adversaries, the Brahmos, and factional divisions among them. Their pro-Government leadership that was at the helm then thought that joining the Congress would 'make the Britishers suspicious of the Hindus and they would, therefore, harm them in all possible ways'.[58] The argument and stance remained valid for some time, but not for long. After some old guards passed away and the younger generation, led by Lajpat Rai, Dwarka Das, Rambhaj Dutt, to name a few, took over, they changed their position and plunged into the Congress stream. Additionally, an important Government measure, the Punjab Land Alienation Act, 1900, which forbade passing of land from the peasants to the commercial classes pushed a sizeable number of the class towards the Congress. This accounts for a fairly good presence of Aryas in all the Congress sessions, from 1899 to 1906 barring the ones in 1902 and 1903.[59]

A general notion persists that the harsh measures that the Punjab Government took vis-á-vis the Arya Samaj during and after the Punjab disturbances, 1907, sent Aryas into hibernation for over a decade. Their non-presence at the Congress Session (1909) held in Lahore itself is given a proof thereof. That is only partially correct.[60] An influential section of the Aryas – the elite – did severe connection with the Congress,[61] but the ordinary folks, the *hoi polloi*, behaved differently. Impassioned followers of their master, they did not change sides as their elite leadership did from time to time. They

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remained steadfastly wedded to the national programme of *swarāj*. The following statement of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, a very knowledgeable, but die-hard imperialist Lieutenant-Governor of Punjab (1912-1919), betrays the truth:

> It should be noted in fairness to the orthodox Hindus that while (Arya) Samaj does not include perhaps more than five per cent of Hindu population of Punjab, an enormous population of the Hindus convicted for sedition and other political offences from 1907 down to the present day (1919) are members of the Arya Samaj.[62]

After 1919, there was greater participation. The joining of Swami Shraddhanand in the Anti-Rowlatt Act Agitation, 1919 and the Non-Cooperation Movement, 1920-22 led by Mahatma Gandhi, prompted both, the Arya elite and the masses, to come to the Congress fold in large numbers. They observed *hartāls* whenever a call was given, and became non-cooperators. They supplied men, money and material to make the movements a success – big success, to be exact.[63] During the Non-Cooperation Movement about 719 persons went to jail, as indicated above, in Punjab. A vast majority of them were Aryas.[64] The situation remained almost unchanged, to 1947. The Arya participation in the Boycott of the Simon Commission, 1928, the Civil Disobedience Movement, 1930-34, the Individual Satyagraha, 1941, and the Quit India Movement, 1942, was equally significant.[65]

Not only in the struggle, the Aryas' contribution to the organisational and electoral matters during this period, was also noteworthy. Lala Lajpat Rai (upto 1928), Satyapal, Rambhaj Dutt, Gopi Chand Bhargava, Duni Chand, Bhagat Ram, Hansraj, Devan Chaman Lal, Sudarshan Seth, Sant Ram, Krishan Gopal Dutt, Bhim Sen Sachar, to name a few, played an important part there.[66]

In sum, what Michael O'Dwyer, the Lieutenant-Governor had said about the role of Aryas in the movements from 1907 to 1919 (quoted above), can well be repeated here about their role in the movements during the later period, i.e. 1919 to 1947, as well.[67]

The story of Uttar Pradesh (then United Provinces) was somewhat different from both Haryana and Punjab. In fact, the position of the Samaj was not the same in the big Province in its spread or strength. Most of its branches were located in Western and Central parts.[68] Though it is not possible to count the exact number of its followers, it can be safely guessed, however, that it was very large. As for politics, the Samaj as a body did not, as indicated above, take any part whatsoever. But Arya Samajists did – and in a large measure.[69]

Brief references have already been made to their contribution to the *swadeshī* movement.[70] After 1919, they formed, literally, the back-bone of the Congress party and all the movements the party launched for *swarāj* right up to 1947 in the regions where they had preponderance.[71] Madho Singh and Sohanlal (Agra), Shiv Sahai and Shiv Narain (Kanpur), Pragdatt (Jhansi), Rashbihari Tiwari and Raghunandan (Lucknow), Dharmadev and Mahavir Tyagi (Dehradun), Radhey Lal (Mathura), Rohsan Lal (Allahabad), Ramudin (Mirzapur), Shankar Dayal (Pratapgarh), Vishambar Sahai

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Premi and Vijaipal Singh (Meerut), Sher Singh and Algu Rai Shastri (Muzaffarnagar), Shiv Kumar, Indermani and Nathu Ram Sharma 'Shankar' (Aligarh and Bulland Shahar), Jayanand Bharti and Shankar Lal (Uttrakhand), Dharmavir, Satyavart, Satyadev and Samar Singh (Haridwar), Raghunandan, and Shanti Swarup (Dehradun), Kedarnath (Faizabad) and Durga Singh (Mainpuri) with their hundreds of compatriots played an important part in spearheading the movement under the banner of the Congress.[72] According to a reliable report, of the total two lakh satyagrahis who went to jail in Uttar Pradesh, about 40 to 45 per cent were Aryas.[73]

The Aryas also began to come closer to Congress and play an important role in freedom struggle in the national capital, Delhi, after 1919 – March 4, 1919, to be precise – when Swami Shraddhanand signed the 'satyagraha pledge' issued by Mahatma Gandhi in the wake of the Anti-Rowlatt Act Agitation.[74] Following their leader, a large number of Aryas, if not all, joined the Agitation. For obvious reasons, the Swami became very popular, not only among Aryas or Hindus, but even among Muslims, who ordinarily kept distance from the Aryas. He was, as the Intelligence reports say, 'the uncrowned king of Delhi' in 1919. There was *hartāl* under his leadership in the city continuously for twenty days (March 30 to April 18). The people were fired at, which resulted in several causalities. One day (March 30) even Swamiji had to bare his chest and say to the soldiers standing in a ready-to-shoot position if he advanced, '*Chalao goli*' (fire).[75] The agitation was a big success. The Government, however, refused to relent. It passed the Rowlatt Bill. Awfully disappointed, Gandhiji launched a bigger and stronger movement – the Non-cooperation Movement. Thanks to Swamiji, says his son Indra Vidyavachaspati, who also played an important role there,

> the Aryas, who had hitherto kept away from politics, got electrified and jumped into the fray. A look at the history of the movement (in Delhi) would show that Aryas from towns and villages[76] were in the forefront in every battle in those days. Among the women who participated in the struggle, more than half came from Arya Samajist families.[77]

It was a spectacular show!

As in the Non-cooperation Movement, the Aryas, both men and women, also played a significant role in the subsequent Gandhian movements, from 1930 to 1942. Indra Vidyavachaspati, his wife Chandravati, Dr. Sukhdev, Satyavati, granddaughter of Swami Shraddhanand, Yuddhavir Singh, Narain Datt, to name a few, played a key role there.[78]

A word about other provinces. Though in most of them – like Bengal, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh (Central Provinces), and Rajasthan (Rajputana) – the Arya Samaj was active in limited areas only, yet, its members played a notable role in the struggle in their respective provinces according to their resources. In Bengal, Ayodh Prasad, Deenbandhu, Priyadarshan, Nagarmal Modi and Sita Ram took eminent part. In Bihar, Dhurendra Shastri, Ramaraksh, Vedavarta (Swami Abhedanand) made, with others, a big contribution. In Madhya Pradesh, Ghansham Singh Gupta and his associates played a prominent role. In Rajasthan (Rajputana), though Samaj had a meaningful presence in most of the major states, the Congress had, as a policy, no organisational setup there.

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It only existed at the individual level. In such a situation, it was not expected of the Aryas to have played some major role there. Some of them, however, went on to contribute to the success of different movements at the national level.[79]

To conclude, I again go to Indra Vidyavachaspati: 'In spite of having pretty thin presence (in demographic terms)', he says,

> in different provinces, the Aryas played a leading role not only at the initial stages of the struggle, but right up to the last moment when the goal was reached. There came moments when the Congress leaders misunderstood the Samaj leaders and activists, but those Aryas who were inspired by the Vedic message of *swarāj* and had learnt the lesson that a foreign rule howsoever beneficial could not be a substitute of *swarāj* from their master, kept fighting for freedom until the last moment. Neither the state oppression nor the opposition from some misguided persons along with some Congressmen, could deflect them from their avowed objective.[80]

## ARYA SAMAJ AND THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

The shame of slavery had begun to pinch the Indian youth by the turn of the 19th century. After some time, it became unbearable and some of them went on to act daringly with a view to obliterating once and for all every vestige of the British rule. The Aryas, though in a minority, played a significant role in the movement, especially in the regions where the organisation had some meaningful presence.

During and after the 'Punjab disturbances' (1907), many young Aryas took to the revolutionary path. They were called 'Youthful Warriors' and were classified as, (a) 'organisers', (b) 'detectives', and (c) 'strikers'. The three groups had their special tasks well cut out for them, i.e. the first group was to organise the party, the second to collect necessary information and the third was expected to throw bombs, etc. on their targets or loot treasures, etc. to finance the movement. The Government soon came to know about them and arrested their leaders, Lal Chand Falak, Kishan Singh, Nand Gopal, and Swaran Singh. They were 'suitably, punished.'[81]

Bhai Parmanand, Professor of History and Politics at the D.A.V. College, Lahore, and a pillar of the Punjab Arya Samaj and the Revolutionary Movement, was also arrested. The Punjab leadership (College section) again behaved in the old fashion. To show that D.A.V. management or institution had no relation with him, Parmanand's services were also terminated.[82]

The Government could, thus, check the individuals, but it could not check the movement. In late 1920's, there was another spate of revolutionary activities in Punjab, which shook the British empire. Bhagat Singh and other Arya revolutionaries like Sukhdev, Bhagwati Charan, Durga Bhabi, Yashpal, Dhanvantari, Hansraj Wireless, Lekhram, Ranbir, Virendra, among others, played a key role there. Some critics say that Bhagat Singh was not an Arya Samajist, and that he was a Marxist. To my mind, the question is not what Bhagat Singh was or was not, but this that nobody can guess as to what had he been, had he not been born to an Arya Samajist family, which inculcated in

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him the Arya Samajist *sanskārs* of patriotism, love of *swarāj* and self-sacrifice that certainly helped him in choosing the path of martyrdom. His comrade Sukhdev organised the movement, went the Bhagat Singh way and gave his life to serve the course of revolution.[83]

In 1912, the Arya activists took part in a daring act in Delhi. Working in association with other revolutionaries led by Rash Bihari Bose, they targeted Lord Hardinge, the Viceroy, on his inaugural visit to the new Imperial Capital, Delhi on December 23. While the loyalist section of the Samaj was according full welcome to the Viceroy a few paces away on bent knees,[84] the young Arya revolutionaries threw a bomb at him. The Viceroy was badly hurt.[85] Fourteen persons connected with the 'Bomb outrage' were arrested. Of these, two prominent Arya activists, Master Amir Chand and Bhai Balmukand were hanged, and one, Balraj Bhalla was sent to the Andamans.[86] Yashpal and other Arya activists kept the fire of revolution burning as best as they could till mid-1930s, when it got off the Delhi soil.

Like their counterparts in Punjab and Delhi, the Arya activists also made a substantial contribution to the revolutionary movement in Rajasthan. The first man to jump into the fray there was a social reformer-turned-revolutionary, Govind Guru. A contemporary of Swami Dayanand, he became his disciple and preached swarāj to his people – the tribals (Banjaras). The British attacked him. There was a pitched battle. Many tribals died. But Govind Guru escaped. After some time, he was arrested and given rigorous imprisonment for 20 years.[87] Kesari Singh Barhat was another famous Arya revolutionary, who preached revolution for which he was sentenced to life imprisonment. He was, however, released in 1919 along with other prisoners after the British victory in World War I. Kesari Singh's brother Zorawar Singh and his son Pratap Singh were also revolutionaries. They were involved in the 'Delhi Bomb Outrage'. Zorawar Singh effected his escape. Pratap, 22, was arrested and tortured to death.[88]

In Uttar Pradesh, too, a number of Aryas joined the revolutionary movement. Genda Lal Dixit, a teacher (Etawah), took part in many a daring activity. He escaped from the police net and went underground. After a long search he was apprehended. But before they could do anything to him, he died of T.B. (1920). Ramprasad Bismil, another staunch Arya Samajist and a tall revolutionary was one of the chief organisers of the movement in Uttar Pradesh. He was, however, apprehended after the famous 'Kakori Train Dacoity', 1928. There was farce of a trial and he was awarded the death penalty. His other compatriots, Roshan Singh and Vishnusharan Dublish, also staunch Arya Samajists, shared the same fate – death by hanging. There were many others who treaded the dangerous path and scripted brilliant chapters in the history of the revolutionary movement in India.[89]

Far away from their motherland, the Arya revolutionaries played an important part in the movement on foreign soils. The most famous among them were: Shyamji Krishnavarma in England, Germany, etc. Madan Lal Dhingra in England and the Ghadar leaders, Lala Hardayal and Kanshi Ram in the US.[90]

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## HYDERABAD SATYAGRAHA

Unlike other movements, the Hyderabad satyagraha was conducted directly by the Samaj, with its own resources, and under its own banner. Hence, a slightly lengthier treatment.

Hyderabad was one of the premier princely states in India. It was predominantly Hindu (about 90%), with the Muslims being in minority (about 10%). The ruler (called Nizam) of the state, Mir Usman Ali Khan, had, unlike his predecessors, an element of religious fanaticism in him. His Government was biased against the non-Muslims, especially the Hindus. Several fundamentalist Muslim groups, organisations and even several Government servants harassed the Hindus in many ways.[91] The latter suffered in silence, for long. But with the advent of Arya Samaj[92] in the 1880s, the situation changed – drastically. Apart from preaching socio-cultural reform, the Samaj took many measures to empower Hindus, such as opening of schools, boarding houses, *akhārās* and *Hanumān Vyayāmshālās* for them. To countercheck the *tabligis* (Muslims who proselytised Hindus), they also started conversion (*shuddhi*) of Muslims to Hinduism.[93]

This infuriated the fundamentalist Muslim groups and organisations, who indulged in rioting and murders. The Nizam Government preached secularism, equality and justice to all, but practiced the opposite. It came down heavily on the Arya activists and put all sorts of restrictions on their activities.[94] They were not allowed to unfurl their *Om dhwaja* (flag). Even 'the right of constructing new temples and repairing old ones', was denied.[95] The Arya leadership met the state authorities to withdraw the obnoxious orders and restrictions on them, but to no avail. In consequence, the Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha (International Aryan League) met in Delhi on April 30, 1938 and, after taking serious stock of the situation, sent a 'charter of demands', to remove all religious and cultural restrictions, to the Nizam Government with an ultimatum – accept the demands or face the consequence – satyagraha.[96]

The Nizam Government climbed down a little.[97] This, however, did not satisfy the Samaj, and it declared satyagraha on October 24, 1938.[98] Mahatma Narayan Swami, an eminent Arya *sannyāsī*, gave the 'inaugural arrest' (February 6, 1939).[99] A large number of *jatthās* (groups) of satyagrahis led by well-known Arya leaders (called Dictators) and individuals followed him.[100] The Nizam requested all the Provinces not to allow the Arya activists to incite the people against him and his Government in their territories. He especially urged the Central Provinces and Bombay (both ruled by the Congress then) to stop the satyagrahis from entering the Hyderabad state through their provinces and organise camps there. Except for Punjab and Madras, none obliged him.[101] The satyagraha went on unabated.

It may be interesting to note that two other organisations, the Hyderabad State Congress and the All India Hindu Mahasabha had also declared satyagraha against the Nizam Government on October 24, 1938 – the former went independently, demanding civil rights and liberties, but the latter joined the Arya Samaj, seeking redressal of grievances of Hindus. The Hyderabad Congress agitation, however, proved short-lived. Directed by the Congress High Command, it suspended its satyagraha after two months.[102] But Hindu Mahasabha went on up to June 1939, after which it also began to

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look the other way. It sent the Shankarāchārya of Jyotirmath, Badrinath, 'without consulting Arya Samaj', on a peace mission to Hyderabad. The Shankarāchārya on the one hand, opened negotiations with the state officials, and on the other, approached, surprisingly, the Archbishop of Canterbury, 'advisor' to the British Government on religious matters, to come in to save the Sanatan Hindu Dharma from 'non-Hindus (Muslims)' and 'un-Hindus (Arya Samajists)'.[103] After some time, the Hindu Mahasabha withdrew the agitation (July, 30 1939).[104]

The Arya Samaj, however, continued its fight as usual. Some writers believe that by mid-year, 1939, the satyagraha was on the wane and it could have collapsed any moment. But facts tell a different tale. There were 900 satyagrahis in the camps and hundreds of them were marching towards Hyderabad from different places when the Nizam accepted most of the Samaj demands, perhaps on the direction of the Central Government. In fact, the World War II was about to happen (it did in less than a month) in which India was supposed to take a leading part. The Government, therefore, did not want the agitation to disturb its own 'war efforts'. Hence, the climb down by Nizam. The Samaj discontinued the satyagraha (August 8, 1939).[105]

The satyagraha was, from the historical perspective, a big success. It was the first major challenge to the authority of one who considered himself unchallengeable. About 12,000 satyagrahis held the ground against him for about eight months, despite painful hardships in the state jails. Over 30 of them lost their lives. Many more became invalid.[106] In spite of all this, the agitation remained neat and peaceful. Even Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the Satyagraha Movement in modern times, was, says Indra Vidyavachaspati, 'all praise' for the way it was conducted according to the principles of Satyagraha.[107] As for its outcome, in the short term it may not have achieved every goal that it was launched for, but in the long run it was a big success. Even Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel admitted that it 'prepared the way for the accession of Hyderabad later' (1948).[108]

The above account shows that inspired and inspirited by its founder, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, the Arya Samaj did a sort of revolutionary work in the domain of social and cultural reform, renaissance and national regeneration. In the field of politics, however, the organisation behaved a little differently. Because of the sizeable presence of pro-government element in the Samaj leadership, it not only kept away from politics as a body, but also showed loyal disposition many a time. But the leadership alone, as indicated above, did not constitute the Samaj. The Arya masses, the basic building blocks of the Samaj, infused with the spirit of their master, joined the national movement in large numbers and fought in every battle for *swarāj* impressively, right from 1875 to 1947.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. For bibliographical details relative to these aspects of Arya Samaj's work, see 'Further Reading' in K.C. Yadav (ed.), 2001, *The Autobiography of Swami Dayanand Saraswati* (hereafter *Autobiography*), Hope India, Gurgaon, pp. 116-27.

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2. There are some small monographs and sundry writings, as we will see later, on the subject, but no comprehensive account, covering the whole period (1875-1947) and different aspects of the struggle is available.
3. H.D. Griswold, 1936, *Insights into Modern Hinduism,* chapter x, Holt, Rein-hart and Winstonic, New Youk, p. 23.
4. D.R. Bhandarkar, *Arya Samaj* in Harbilas Sarda, 1933, *Dayanand Commemoration Volume* (hereafter Commemoration), Paropkarini Sahba, Ajmer, p. 126.
5. G.A. Natesan, *From Ramanand to Ram Tirth: Lives of the saints of Northern India,* G.A. Nateson & Co., Madras, p. 195.
6. See K.C. Yadav and K.S. Arya, 1988, *Arya Samaj and Freedom Movement, 1875-1918,* D.A.V. Publications Foundation, Delhi, vol. 1, p. 38.
7. *Paropkari,* 1984, vol. 26, no. 6, pp. 2-3.
8. For different years and other details, see NAI, Home, Political-B, nos. 53-58, July 1910; C.E.W. Sands, 1910, *The Arya Samaj in the United Provinces,* Government Press, Allahabad, p. 38; Lajpat Rai, 1952, *A History of the Arya Samaj,* Bombay, pp. 156-59; Indra Vidyavachaspati, 2014, *Arya Samaj kā Itihāsa,* Arya Prakashan, Delhi, vol. 2, pp. 206-9; Yadav and Arya, *op.cit.,* pp. 18-19.
9. Dayanand Swami, *Satyarth Prakash,* tr. Durga Prasad, 1972, New Delhi, chapter xi, p. 269.
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Ibid.*
12. *Ibid.*, p. 552.
13. *Ibid,* p. 228.
14. *Ibid,* p. 10.
15. *Ibid,* p. 232.
16. Quoted in Munshiram and Ramdev, 1910, *Arya Samaj and its Detractors: A Vindication,* Gurukula Kangri, pp. 11-12.
17. Dayanand might not have been the first author of the *Swadeshī* Movement in India, says Dr. R. C. Majumdar, but he was certainly its first forceful advocate in modern times. R.C. Majumdar, 1962, *History of Freedom Movement in India,* Calcutta, vol., I, p. 35.
18. 'Look at the Europeans', Dayanand observed, 'they allow persons to go into their offices and shops with shoes on if made in their country, but not if made in this country (after Indian fashion). Now it is enough to show you how much they respect even the shoes made in their country, but not the men of other countries.' *Satyarth Prakash,* chapter xi, p. 374.
19. Dayanand, *Satyarth Prakash,* pp. 39-40, 258, 374.
20. Yadav and Arya, *op.cit.,* vol. 1, p. 38.
21. *Ibid.*
22. Mulraj, 1975, *Beginning of Punjabi Nationalism, Autobiography,* V.V.R.I, Hoshiarpur, p. 106.
23. Mulraj, *op.cit.,* p. 106.
24. Sands, *op.cit.,* pp. 141-72.
25. *Swadeshī* activists opened in Lahore the Punjab National Bank in 1895 and the Bharat Insurance Company a little later. After some time, cloth industries also came up in Amritsar and Ludhiana. Trading in *swadeshī* goods became popular in almost every town. See N.G. Barrier, '*The Arya Samaj and Congress Politics in the Punjab, 1894-1905*' in *Journal of Asiatic Society,* 1968, vol. 27, no. 3, pp. 365-66; Satyaketu, Vidyalankar, 1985, *Arya Samaj kā Itihāsa,* Arya Swadhyaya Kendra, vol. 4, p. 95.
26. For Aryas' effort for inclusion of *swadeshī* in the constitution and official business of the Congress in those early days, see Barrier, *op.cit.,* pp. 366-73.
27. See Yadav, *Modern Haryana,* p. 144; Yadav and Arya, *op.cit.,* p. 52.
28. Munshiram and Ramdev, *op.cit.,* p. 15.
29. Quoted in Sands, *op.cit.,* p. 36.

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30. Munshiram and Ramdev, *op.cit.*, p. 16.
31. *Ibid.*
32. Quoted in *ibid.*, pp. 81-82.
33. Quoted in Sands, *op.cit.*, p. 39.
34. See Satyadev Vidyalankar, 1946, *Rāshtravādī Dayanand*, Marwari Publications, Delhi, p. 25.
35. NAI, Home Political-B, Nos. 53-58, July 1911.
36. For details, see Yadav and Arya, *op.cit.*, pp. 80-112.
37. *Ibid.*
38. *Ibid.*
39. *Ibid.*
40. *Bharatmitra*, ed. Babu Balmukand Gupt, Calcutta, August 10, 1907.
41. For Sir Denzil's minute on Punjab situation, April 30, 1907, see Lajpat Rai, 1965, *Autobiographical Writings*, ed. V.S. Joshi, University Publishers, Delhi, pp. 228-40.
42. For details, see K.C. Yadav, 1986, *Role of D.A.V. Institutions in Freedom Struggle, 1885-1947*, Monograph, Chandigarh.
43. NAI, Home Political-B, nos. 53-58, December 1910; *The Tribune*, January 16, 1911.
44. NAI, Home Political B, nos. 53-58, December 1911.
45. Mahatma Munshiram, for instance, rebuked his people for their cowardly disposition in his lecture given at Lahore in April 1907... Munshiram and Ramdev, *op.cit.*, pp. 104-5.
46. What were Mahatma Munshiram's views vis-a-vis the Government about this time may be seen from the following quote from his writing (1906). 'It is the duty of the King-Emperor and the (British) Parliament to keep the government of this country in their own hands in the true sense of the term, so as to strengthen the foundations of British rule in India and deserve blessings from the voiceless Indian people'. (NAI, Selection from the Newspapers published in the United Provinces, 1906, p. 19). At another place, he expressed his wish to see the British rule to continue for long. See Satyaketu, *op.cit.*, vol. 4, pp. 407-8.
47. For detail see Yadav and Arya, *op.cit.*, pp. 133-35.
48. See for this, K.C. Yadav, 2014, *Haryana kā Itihāsa*, Hope India, Gurgaon, reprint, pp. 12-13.
49. For details, see Yadav, *Murlidhar*, pp. 49-55.
50. The first branch of the Congress in the country was established at Ambala in January 1886. Hisar and Rohtak followed suit (1888). After some time, most of other Haryana towns had branches. See Yadav, *Modern Haryana*, pp. 135-37.
51. Earlier, these branches were mostly of non-formal type, one or more elderly activists managed their affairs informally, but as time passed the organizational apparatus improved, not only at the district and tehsil levels but also in a large measure at the village level. In 1938-39, for instance, there were well organized five district branches, 20 tehsil branches and 205 town and village branches. In the next decade the situation improved still further. See Yadav and Arya, *op.cit.*, p. 190.
52. Haryana made up about 18.8 per cent of the Punjab population at that time. In the Non-cooperation Movement, about 719 people from Punjab gave arrests. As per its population Haryana's quota of arrests should have been about 135. But the region gave 375 arrests. Not only that, they also bettered the Punjab total in leaving of schools and colleges by the students, shunning of courts by lawyers and litigants and going for *swadeshī* and boycott of British goods. Yadav, *Modern Haryana*, pp. 161-70.
53. *Ibid.*, pp. 175-83.
54. *Ibid.*, pp. 193-95.
55. *Ibid.*, pp. 195-99.
56. It is a rough estimate made on the basis of short biographies of the freedom fighters from Haryana, given in K.C. Yadav and Rameshwar Das, 1994, *Rebels against the Raj: Who is Who of Freedom Fighters in Haryana, 1885–1947*, Mounto Publishers, Delhi, 2 vols.

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57. See Barrier, *op.cit.*, pp. 363-79.
58. The Aryas did not attend the 1902 and 1903 annual sessions of Congress. The main reason was the indifference that the Congress leadership showed towards the Punjab Land Alienation Bill, 1900 and their request to draw up the Congress Constitution and the inclusion of the *swadeshī*, industry and education in its official business every year.
59. The presence of the Aryas in the annual sessions of the Congress was as follows: 39% of the total Punjab delegates in 1899, 36% in 1900, 33% in 1901, 50% in 1904, 49% in 1905 and 47% in 1906. For details, see Barrier, *op.cit.*, pp. 366-67.
60. See *The Tribune*, July 5, 1909.
61. The presence of the Aryas in the annual sessions of the Congress from 1910 to 1914 was also negligible. Even the total presence of the Punjabis on the whole was 37/446 in 1911, 4/207 in 1912, 10/550 in 1913 and 0/866 in 1914. Annie Besant, 1915, *How India Wrought for Freedom*, Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, pp. 509, 528, 570, 595, quoted in K.W. Jones, 1976, *Arya Dharma*, University of California, Berkeley, p. 293.
62. Michael O'Dwyer, 1925, *The India as I knew it*, Constable & Co., London, p. 184.
63. See *The Tribune*, July 5, 1909.
64. It is a rough calculation based on the short profiles of the freedom fighters as given in Fauja Singh (ed.), 2000, *Who is Who of Freedom Fighters in Punjab*, vol. 1, Punjabi University, Patiala; Param B. Singh (ed.), 2007, vol. 2.
65. *Ibid.*
66. For their short profiles, see *ibid*; also Fauja Singh, 1972, *Eminent Freedom Fighters of Punjab*, Punjabi University, Patiala; for electoral aspect, see K.C. Yadav, 1981, *Elections in Punjab*, 1919-1947, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Tokyo.
67. The number of the Aryas in the Congress campaigns went on increasing with time.
68. 74 branches of the Samaj had come up in Dayanand's lifetime. Later, their number increased slowly, but steadily. By a reliable count, there were 244 branches in 1898, 506 in 1911 and 689 in 1947. See Indra, *op.cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 70-71; *Smārikā, Arya Samaj*, Meerut, 1949.
69. See for reference, f.n. 35.
70. See f.n. 20.
71. Satyaketu, *op.cit.*, vol. 6, pp. 21-40.
72. *Ibid.*
73. *Ibid.*
74. Swami Shraddhanand 'had remained completely away from active politics up to that time. He did not have any faith in political games: he considered them to be mere 'show'. But when Gandhi entered the arena of politics with an approach to politics that included self-denial, the Swami was deeply attracted'. Indra Vidyavachaspati, *Mere Pitā*, p. 199, quoted in J.T.F. Jordens, 1981, *Swami Shraddhanand, His Life and Causes*, Oxford, Delhi, p. 107.
75. Satyadev Vidyalankar, 1995, *Swami Shraddhanand*, Shraddhanand Anusandhan Prakashan Kendra, Haridwar, pp. 480-81.
76. The Aryas in large numbers would come from the adjoining towns on the main railway lines from Rohtak, Panipat, Gurgaon and Ballabhgarh sides to Delhi daily by morning trains, work in Delhi and go back by the evening trains. see Sangat Singh, 1970, '*Haryana's Response to Delhi Hartāl*, March-April, 1919', Jour. of Haryana Studies, vol. 2, nos. 1-2, pp. 40-43.
77. See Indra, *op.cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 97-100.
78. See *ibid;* Satyaketu, *op.cit.*, vol. 6, pp. 40-43.
79. See *ibid.* vol. 2, p. 100, vol. 6, pp. 43-45.
80. Indra, *op.cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 97-100.
81. They were apprehended, tried and given the following punishments: Lal Chand Falak – 4 years 6 months; Kishan Singh – 1 year, 5 months; Nand Gopal – transportation (5 years). Yadav and Arya, *op. cit.*, pp. 194-95.

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82. See Parmanand, *The Story of My Life*, Lahore, pp. 40-41. He was, however, given full salary every month. This could be perhaps to bluff the Government or some faction within the management.
83. See Jitendra Sanyal, 2006, *Bhagat Singh: A Biography*, ed. K.C. Yadav and Babar Singh, Hope India, Gurgaon; K.C. Yadav and Babar Singh (eds.), 2006, *Bhagat Singh: Making of a Revolutionary*, Hope India, Gurgaon.
84. Satyadev, *Dayanand*, pp. 105-6.
85. See for details, Hardinge, *My Indian Years, 1910-1916*, pp. 121-2.
86. Yadav and Arya, *op.cit.*, pp. 199-203.
87. *Ibid.*, pp. 204-07.
88. For more details on Barhats, please see chapter 14, pp. 225-228.
89. See K.C. Ghosh, 1965, *The Role of Honour: Anecdotes of Indian Martyrs*, Vidya Bhawan, Calcutta.
90. Dayanand, *Autobiography*, Editor's Introduction, p. 22.
91. Jaidev Vidyalankar and Suryadev Sharma, 1947, *Hyderabad Satyagraha kā raktaranjit Itihāsa*, Arya Sahitya Mandal, Ajmer, pp. 21-41.
92. The first Arya Samaj was established in 1880 at Dharur, dis. Bheed. There was no looking back after that. By 1938, their numbers went beyond 250. See T. Uma, *Accession of Hyderabad State to the Indian Union: A Study of the Political Pressure Groups*, University of Hyderabad (Ph.D. Thesis), 2003, p. 5; Jayashree S. Prabha, 'Arya Samaj Movement in Liberation of Hyderabad-Karnataka' in *Indian Streams Journal*, vol. 3, no. 4, 2013, p. 3.
93. S. Prabha, *op. cit.*, p. 3.
94. For details, see Jaidev and Sharma, *op. cit.*, pp. 46-72; Uma, *op. cit.*, p. 141.
95. T. Uma, *op. cit.*, p. 141.
96. For details, see D. Benichou, 2000, *From Autocracy to Integration: Political Developments in Hyderabad State* (1938-1948), Orient Longman, Hyderabad, pp. 61-62.
97. Ghanshyam Singh Gupt, Speaker of Central Provinces Assembly and President of the Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, New Delhi, was invited to discuss matters. He was, however, not satisfied. *Ibid.*, p. 62.
98. *Ibid.*
99. For details, see Indra, *op.cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 246-49.
100. The following were the eight *sarvādhikārīs* (dictators) who conducted the movement and courted arrest with large *jatthās:* Narayan Swami, Chandkaran Sarda, Khushahal Chand Khursand, Dhurendra Shastri, Vedavart, Mahashe Krishan, Gyanedra and Vinayak Rao.
101. For details, see Benichou, *op. cit.*, p. 74. Though the Punjab and Madras Governments obliged the Nizam, their people did not – they carried on anti-Hyderabad activities.
102. For details, see Benichou, *op. cit.*, pp. 64-70.
103. British Library, R/1/29/1922, Shankarāchārya to Archbishop, July 5, 1939, *ibid.*, pp. 78-79.
104. *Ibid.*, pp. 81-82.
105. Indra, *op.cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 282-87.
106. Jaidev and Sharma, *op.cit.*, pp. 1-2.
107. Indra, *op.cit.*, vol. 2, p. 295.
108. T. Uma, *op.cit.*, p. 153.

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# CHAPTER 14

# Arya Samaj and the Revolutionary Movement

## *Ram Prasad Bismil, Kultar Singh and K.C. Yadav*

A large number of revolutionaries were inspired by the teachings of Maharshi Dayanand who gave the slogan: "Whatever may one do, indigenous rule (*swarāj*) is always the best. Foreign government cannot be perfectly beneficial even when it is free of religious bias, race-prejudice, and is full of parental justice and mercy."[1] His impact on India's revolutionary movement can be illustrated by the following four examples of famous revolutionaries, one each from U.P., Punjab, present day Haryana and Rajasthan, who helped translate the slogan of *swarāj* into a reality.

### I
### RAM PRASAD BISMIL[2]

Shriyut Munshi Inderjitji[3] advised me (Ram Prasad Bismil) to do *Sandhyā*... On account of taking regular physical exercise, I was physically fit and fine; my complexion was blooming. I wanted to know what exactly *Sandhyā* was. Munshiji gave me a discourse on Arya Samaj, after which I studied Satyarth Prakash. This caused a metamorphosis. The study of Satyarth Prakash opened a new chapter in my life. I started following the difficult principles of *Brahmacharya.* I would spread a blanket on a wooden bed and sleep on it. Early morning at four O'clock, I would wake up for the morning regimen of bath and *Sandhyā* followed by physical exercise...

In a few days, I became a committed follower of Arya Samaj and would attend its meetings and listen intently to the lectures of its Sannyāsīs. Whenever any Sannyāsī came to Arya Samaj I would look after him with all sincerity because I had a great desire to learn *Prāṇāyāma*... When I was in class seven, Pandit Jagat Prasadji of Sanatan Dharm came to Shahjahanpur. He started denigrating Arya Samaj. Arya Samajists opposed him

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and invited Pandit Akhilanandji for a debate with him. The debate was in Sanskrit. This impressed the people. Seeing my activities, people from my locality complained to my father. He told me that Arya Samajis have lost so I should dissociate myself. I told father that the principles of Arya Samaj are universal who can challenge and defeat them? After a heated discussion, my father became adamant and said, "If you do not resign from Arya Samaj, I will kill you in sleep. Either you quit Arya Samaj or leave home." I thought to myself that if my father's rage gets out of hand and he hits me, it will have bad consequences. So the best course would be to leave home. I was wearing only a shirt and loin cloth under the pyjāmā, I was trying to drape a dhoti. Father snatched my dhoti away and asked me to leave the house. I too, got into a rage, touched my father's feet and left home. I was flabbergasted as I had nowhere to go. I did not know anyone, at whose place I could take shelter. I went towards the forest and sat for one day and night under a tree. When I felt hungry, I picked green grams from the fields and ate them, had a bath in the river and took my breakfast. The next evening, there was a lecture by Pandit Akhilanand at the Arya Samaj temple. I went to the Arya Samaj temple and was listening to a lecture standing under a tree. Lo and behold, father arrived with two others and caught me. I was immediately taken to the school headmaster who was a Christian. I related the whole thing to him. He counselled my father that it was improper to physically beat a sensible boy and also gave me a piece of his mind. Thereafter, father never physically beat me. Because of my abandoning home, there was much anguish in the family. Nobody ate for a day, worried as they were that the only son might have drowned or run over by a train. It also came as a great shock to father. Since then he started tolerating all I did and his opposition became milder. I was studious and always topped the class. This was the situation till the eighth class.

When I was in class eight, Swami Somdevji Saraswati came to Arya Samaj, Shahjahanpur. His lectures left a deep impression on people. On the insistence of some gentlemen, Swamiji stayed at Shahjahanpur Arya Samaj Temple. He was not too well. I used to visit Swamiji off and on and sincerely looked after him. This changed my life. I would stay serving him late into the night and throughout the day... He would give me various discourses. I translated these lectures into action. He was my guide, teacher and philosopher. It was his teachings which gave me spiritual strength.

Some young men got together and started an Arya Kumar Sabha at the Arya Samaj temple. Every Friday there was a meeting in which religious books were studied, essays on specific topics were written, and discussions were held. I learnt public speaking in Kumar Sabha only. Often the youth from Kumar Sabha went to public fairs for *prachār*. They would preach the principles of Arya Samaj in the markets. This led to discussions with the Muslims. Fearing riots, the police stopped these public lectures. Seeing the initiatives of the youth, the Arya Samaj tried to dominate the *sabha*. But, the youth were not prepared to put up with anyone's domination. The Arya Samaj Mandir was locked to prevent the youth from using it. It was also declared that if they continued with the meetings there, the police would be summoned to throw them out. For many months we held our meetings in the open, but we were youngsters, how long could it go on! Kumar Sabha was abolished. It was then, that the Arya Samajists could rest in peace. Kumar Sabha had become known even beyond its own city. At the Lucknow Session of

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the Congress, Bharat Varshīya Kumar Sabha held its meeting. On this occasion, maximum prizes were won by Lahore and Shahjahanpur Kumar Sabhas. The newspapers carried appreciative news about them...

Till I was eighteen, I had not travelled by train. But, I had become determinedly truthful. Once I had purchased a third class train ticket but in the company of others travelled Inter class. I felt very bad about it. I told my friends that this amounted to cheating so we should all combine and give the excess fare to the station master. At one time, my father had filed a case against somebody and had told the lawyer that if there was any work, he should contact me. There was some requirement, the lawyer sent for me and asked me to sign for my father on the 'Power of Attorney'. I replied immediately that this would be against *Dharma* and declined to put my signatures. The lawyer argued strongly that the case was for more than a hundred rupees, and it would be dismissed. But this had no effect on me and I did not sign. I practiced truth and would speak the truth without worrying about the consequences.

My mother (Mul Mantri Devi) was very helpful in my religious activities as well as education. She would wake me up at four in the morning. I would religiously perform Havan every day.[4] To arrange the marriage of my younger sister, my parents had gone to Gwalior. My grandmother and I stayed on at Shahjahanpur because of my annual examination. After my examination, I went to participate in my sister's wedding. Upon reaching the outskirts of the village, I learnt that a female dancer had come with the marriage party. I neither went home nor participated in the marriage.

As a matter of fact, my late mother was an angel. Whatever courage I had in life was because of her and the blessings of Gurudev Shri Somdevji. My grandmother and father were very insistent that I should get married but my mother would always say that it would be proper to marry only after the completion of my education. My mother gave me the strength and courage to face all odds in life. After I joined the Arya Samaj, I had regular conversations with my mother on the teachings of the Arya Samaj. In the context of the times, her thinking was very liberal. Had my mother not been there, I would have led a very mundane worldly life. Apart from education, even in my revolutionary life, she helped me like Mazzini's[5] mother.

My *janma dātri* (life-giver) mother in this life I did not get a chance to repay your debt. Leave alone this life, even in subsequent lives, I will not be able to repay the debt. The way you reformed this mundane life is indescribable. I remember every incident of my life. Your divine blessings reformed me. I could devote myself to the service of the motherland because of you. Your blessings helped me, in my religious life too. Whatever education I attained is due to you. The charming manner in which you preached is unforgettable and I bow in humility. Even if you scolded me, it was with affection. Even when I was insolvent, you only told me affectionately that I could do what I wanted to, but at the same time cautioned me that the consequence would be bad. Life-giver mother, you have not only given birth and brought me up but have been always by my side in my spiritual, religious and social progress. I pray to God that He may give a mother like you in my subsequent lives too.

Even in the worst crisis you did not let me lose patience. You always gave me solace with your affectionate words. In your benign presence, I did not face any

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problem. I have no desire for any worldly pleasures, but just one consuming wish that I should make my life blessed by serving you. But it seems this wish will not get fulfilled and you will have to hear the sad news of my death. Mother, I am confident that you will bear it bravely knowing that your son sacrificed his life in the service of the Motherland and did not let a blot come on your family. He was steadfast in his conviction. When the history of India comes to be written then on some page your name will be there in glowing terms. Guru Gobind Singh's wife felt very happy when she got the news of her sons' sacrifice. She distributed sweets that her sons had given their life for *Dharma* and their country. My life-giver, bless me that I should not lose courage and I should give up my life remembering you and God...

Raja Mahendra Pratap[6] was very impressed after hearing his (Swami Somdev's) lectures at the annual function of Aryamitra Sabha, Agra. Raja Sahib touched his feet and took him to his *koṭhī*. Since then Raja Sahib would often listen to his lectures and consider him his Guru. I have never seen such a forthright and lucid speaker. I heard his first lecture in 1913 at Shahjanpur. He had come to the annual function of the Arya Samaj. At that time he was staying at Bareilly. For two or three years he was invited regularly to the annual functions of the Arya Samaj. At the behest of some well-wishers he started living at Arya Samaj, Shahjanpur in 1915. It is then that I started spending time in his service.

Swamiji was giving me religious and political discusses and would advise me to read such books. He was very knowledgeable on political matters also. He had great exchange of views with Lala Hardayal. Once he saved Mahatma Munshiram ji (Late Swami Shradanand) from police atrocities. He was very close to Shriyut Krishanji and Acharya Ramdev. He was not very forthright with me on political matters. He would often tell me to go to Europe after passing Inter and to go to Italy to see the land of Mahatma Mazzini. The Lahore episode happened in 1916. I would keenly read the newspapers about it. I had great regard for Shriyut Bhai Parmanand and was greatly influenced after reading his *"Tavārīkh-e-Hind."* The judgment on the Lahore case came out in the papers. Reading about the death sentence to Bhai Parmanand, I was terribly enraged. I thought that the British are very cruel. There is no justice in their rule because they have given death sentence to such a noble person. I resolved that I will take revenge, will endeavour my whole life to annihilate the British Rule. After this resolve, I went to Swamiji, gave him all the news and the newspapers. Swamiji was very pained on reading the paper. But when I spoke about my resolve, he remarked that it is easy to make resolutions but difficult to keep them. I touched his feet and said if I continue to have your blessings, I will not falter. Since then, Swamiji started opening up. This was the beginning of my revolutionary life.

**Note:** Arms were needed for the revolutionary activities and money was required for purchasing the arms. So, Ram Prasad Bismil and his associates stopped the train going from Saharanpur to Lucknow in between Kakori and Alamnagar stations near pole number 52 at 8 pm on August 9, 1925 and looted the treasury. His group was also involved in Bichpuri and Barmauli dacoities. They were tried under IPC, sections, 121 A, 120 B and 396. Ram Prasad Bismil, Ashfaq Ulla Khan[7] were sentenced to death in two

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cases. Roshan Singh was sentenced to death in one case and rigorous imprisonment for five years each in other two cases. Rajendra Nath Lahiri was given death sentence in one case and transportation for life in another. Ram Prasad Bismil was kept in a death cell measuring 9 x 9 foot with a single small door 6 x 2 foot and a ventilator (2 x 1 foot) at a height of 8 to 9 feet from the floor, for about three and a half months. He was required to have food, bath and answer calls of nature in this death cell itself. Lahiri was hanged on December 17, 1927 and the other three two days after, on December 19. On the last day, Bismil performed his daily routines and *Sandhyā*[8] in the morning. He wrote the following historic massage in a letter to his mother just an hour before his hanging,

> After meeting you,[9] my resolve became more firm and I will happily sacrifice my life. I hope that after my death, you will remain calm and feel happy that your humble servant sacrificed his life for the country. Roshan, Lahiri, Ashfaq have been hanged and I will be hanged after an hour. I feel it my duty to leave a message for the youth of India. If our deaths cause anguish and tension nobody should do anything in a fit of anger which will trouble my soul. I would be pained and it would be injustice to me, if some individual/individuals who had informed the police about us, was/were murdered. I would like to forgive all those who are perceived to have harmed me for the following two reasons.
>
> 1. The atmosphere and circumstances of India are such that very few individuals have determination.
>
> 2. I am a follower of Maharshi Dayanand who gave money to the person who had poisoned him, so that he could escape.
>
> If the youth have felt some agitation and motivation, it is proper that they should go to villages and improve the conditions of farmers, make the circumstances of labourers better, as far as possible they should educate ordinary people, work for the Congress and uplift the Dalits. When so much will be achieved, those who wanted us to be punished will be put to shame and I will find peace. I propose to you all that nobody should be treated with contempt. Everybody should be treated with compassion.
>
> Gorakhpur District Jail — Faithfully yours
> 19.12.27 — Ram Prasad Bismil[10]

**Note:** When Bismil was being taken to the gallows, he walked with *Vande Mātaram* and *Bhārat Mātā kī Jai* on his lips and submitting himself to God saying

मालिक तेरी रज़ा रहे और तू ही तू रहे, बाकी न मैं रहूँ न मेरी आरज़ू रहे।
जब तक कि तन में जान रगों में लहू रहे, तेरा ही जिक्र या, तेरी ही जुस्तजू रहे।।

On reaching the gallows he raised the slogan, *I wish the down-fall of British Empire.* Then he prayed to God reciting the eight Veda-mantras *Viśvāni deva saviturduritāni...* He was then hanged until death. His dead body was handed over to the family who performed his *Antyeṣṭi Sanskār* according to full Vedic rites as per his wish.[11]

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## II
## ARYA SAMAJ AND OUR FAMILY

Sardar Kultar Singh, the younger brother of Shaheed Bhagat Singh and a freedom fighter himself, wrote about Arya Samaj and their family, as under:

In the British dominance and darkness of deceit, a messiah was born whose name was Swami Dayanand. This noble soul who was a social reformist highlighted social reforms, rejected superstitions wiping out the prevalent bad customs. This great personality, revolutionising India, reached Punjab. My grandfather Sardar Arjun Singh was totally impressed when he saw Swami Dayanand. He began dreaming of social reforms and independence. Sardar Arjun Singh was one of those great personalities who were personally adorned with the sacred thread (*Yajñopavīta*) by Swami Dayanand himself. From that very day, my grandfather gave up liquor and non-vegetarian food and thus was laid the foundation of revolution, in our family.

Now *Sandhyā* twice a day and the Havan Kuṇḍ became the constant companions of our grandfather.[12] At that time, it was very difficult to move to the Arya Samaj, discarding the temple. My grandfather had reached the Arya Samaj moving from the Gurudwara. He would go everywhere with the Aum flag and was invited to all meetings of the Arya Samaj as the chief speaker. It is a coincidence that when Congress was established, Swami Dayanand founded the Arya Samaj; thus started a renaissance in Bharat Varsh. In 1920 at the time of civil disobedience, he picked up the tricolour flag and laid down the Aum flag. Awakening of society and its uplift became the sole objective of the Arya Samaj. After benediction from Swami Dayanand, our family acquired a new cultural life and it became ready for revolution. He was the first Jat Sikh who sent his elder and middle sons Kishan Singh and Ajit Singh to Sain Das Anglo Sanskrit High School at Jalandhar for education. He understood fully the mission and the thinking of Dayanand and tried to mould himself accordingly. His depth is evident from the fact that on subjects like *shrāddha* and idol worship, he was the principal speaker of Arya Samaj and travelled far and wide as an Arya Samaj spokesperson.[13]

The British government was fully aware that the rise of the Arya Samaj was an indication of the future rise of the Indian society which would be difficult to suppress. So a suit was filed against the Arya Samajists of Patiala that they denigrate the Sikh scripture Guru Granth Sahib. Sardar Arjun Singh then presented a hundred *Shlokas* of Guru Granth Sahib which were similar to the Veda mantras and tried to prove that there is no difference between the Vedas and Guru Granth Sahib and they deserve equal veneration.[14] There was profuse praise in the Arya Samaj for Sardar Arjun Singh's efforts to defeat the British design.

In those days, the Arya Samaj was combating strongly, all types of superstitions and the feelings of servitude. Our family too could not remain untouched by this spirit. At the ceremony of giving *yajñopavīta* or the holy thread to his elder grandsons Jagat Singh and Bhagat Singh, Sardar Arjun Singh stood at the site of the *yajña* and pledged the lives of both to the cause of the nation's freedom.[15] He never pressurised the other members of the family to become Arya Samajists. He always provided his cooperation to all religious activities with respect and reverence. Inspired by Swami Dayanand

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Saraswati, our grandfather set up the altar of revolution in the family, at which the other members of the family began offering their lives, like the offerings in a *yajña*. Our home in Punjab had become the centre of revolutionary activities in North India. Our entire family had devoted itself totally to the national movement. My father Sardar Kishan Singh, his brother and all the children of the family were making efforts to carry forward the torch of revolution. In those days thousands of worthy sons of Mother India like Lokmanya Tilak, Sardar Ajit Singh, Sufi Amba Prasad, Lala Hardayal, Sardar Kartar Singh, Lala Lal Chand Falak, Mahashay Ghaseeta Ram, Bhai Parmanand, Nand Kishore, Zia-ul-Haq, Lala Pindi Das, Veer Savarkar, Maulana Mahmud-ul-Hasan, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, Shacheendranath Sanyal, Chandrashekhar Azad, Pandit Ram Prasad 'Bismil'. Ashfaq Ulla Khan, Thakur Roshan Singh, Rajendra Nath Lahiri, Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, Sukhdev and Batukeshwar Dutt were keen to sacrifice their lives to free the nation from the shackles of bondage. Sardar Arjun Singh passed away in 1932, and thus was gone a person whose every ounce of blood was devoted to lighting up ever-newer lamps of revolution all his life.

Our family was influenced and energised by the flame of the revolutionary fire that was lit in the heart of our grandfather Sardar Arjun Singh by coming in contact with Swami Dayanand Saraswati.

## III
## THE BARHAT TRIMURTI

Krishna Singh Barhat (1850-1907), born in a village named Devpura in Shahpura State (in the then Rajputana) came from a distinguished family of Charans. Kaviraj Shyamaldas[16] was his maternal uncle. Kaviraj was well versed in Hindi, Sanskrit, Urdu and Persian. He was one of the Chief counsellors of the ruler of Udaipur. He met Swami Dayanand when the Swami came to Chittor for the first time in 1882. Later during his stay at Udaipur, he along with Maharana Sajjan Singh, learnt Manusmriti, Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika Darśanas from him. He became Swami Dayanand's disciple and followed his teachings. He was against orthodoxy, idol worship, astrology, etc. He believed in one and only one God who is formless, omnipresent and omniscient. Several letters were exchanged between Swamiji and Barhat Krishna Singh.[17] He was a known historian and politician of his times. He was a suspect in the eyes of British Government. Under immense pressure from the British Government, his palatial house[18] and moveable as well as immovable property at Shahpura was confiscated by Raja Nahar Singh of Shahpura state in May 1893 and he was banished from the state. At the same time, he was forced to leave Udaipur and was removed from all offices in the state. He shifted to Jodhpur where he died in 1907.[19] Seven years after his death, his eldest son Kesari Singh Barhat, youngest son Zorawar Singh Barhat and a grandson Kunwar Pratap Singh Barhat plunged into an armed struggle against the British rule and sacrificed everything in the freedom struggle.

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***Kesari Singh Barhat***

Kesari Singh Barhat[20] (November 21, 1872 - August 14, 1941), born in Devpura village of Shahpura state, was another Arya revolutionary. A well-read Charan lad, he was employed by the ruler of Udaipur as his counsellor. He did not like the atmosphere of the *darbār* and therefore shifted to Kota on the invitation of the ruler of that state on the same assignment. He was sensitive to the extant conditions around him, especially the wretched condition that the people were reduced to by the British government and their feudal lackeys. He took a vow to do away with the *Rāj*, and formed a revolutionary organisation called *Vir Bharat Sabha* in association with Thakur Gopal Singh of Kharwa. He established contacts with revolutionaries like Rash Behari Bose and revolutionary organisations like the *Abhinava Bharat.*

The Government came to know of his activities no sooner than he had started them. In the words of the political secretary to the Government of India (1914):

> It appears that there has been existing for some years in Rajputana without the knowledge of the *Durbar* or of the Political Officers a secret political organisation directed originally against the Chiefs of Rajaputana but subsequently against the British Government... There is, further, some reason to believe that efforts were made by Kesari Singh, fortunately with little result, to tamper with the loyalty of the Rajput troops.[21]

Kesari Singh also created disaffection against the rulers of the Rajput states. In 1903, for instance, he exhorted Fateh Singh, the Maharana of Udaipur, not to attend the *Delhi Darbār* organised by Lord Curzon on February 1, 1903, to commemorate the coronation of Edward VII. For, he said, that would be in utter contravention of the noble tradition of his forefathers who never went to the Delhi Darbār. The Maharana was influenced by his soul stirring message[22] and he came back from Delhi without attending the *Darbār.*

Kesari Singh's work, however, could not move smoothly for the want of funds. He, therefore, killed a wealthy corrupt Mahant, Pyare Ram (1914). For this, he was arrested, tried, and awarded life imprisonment. An excerpt from the judgment (December 11, 1914):

> Barhat Kesari Singh, who has served in the Kotah State for a long time, is a man of learning and possesses intelligence above the average. His ideas towards the Government of India were as disaffected and antagonistic as those of the seditious and anarchical societies of Bengal. He was desirous of disseminating similar views in Rajputana and his efforts resulted in establishing a Rajput Boarding House at Kotah, and a Rajput Charan Boarding House at Jodhpur... It has been admitted... that Kesari Singh's intention in acquiring the wealth of Pyare Ram was to apply it to the *Desh Unnati* and Education...[23]

Kesari Singh was locked in a solitary cell at Hazari Bagh jail in Bihar (now in Jharkhand), where he remained until 1919 when he was released after the British success in World War I. He again started his work against the British rulers through his

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writings. The Kota ruler did not like his release and asked the government to revise its decision. Mr. Craik, Home Secretary, Government of India, accepting the mistake, wrote to the ruler thus: (September 23, 1919):

> ...It is most undesirable that this dangerous criminal should now be at large. *Prima facie* it would appear that his release was irregular, and due to the negligence of the Government of India's agents, and there would not seen to be anything illegal in rearresting him to serve the remainder of his sentence...[24]

He was not rearrested, however, and allowed to settle down in Kota state where he continued to serve his people. On the invitation of Seth Jamnalal Bajaj, he moved to Wardha where he came in close contact with Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Bhagwan Das, Rajarshi Purusotm Das Tandon, Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi and several others. The revolutionary poet gave his all for the freedom of nation and breathed his last on August 14, 1941.[25]

***Zorawar Singh Barhat***

Kesari Singh's brother Zorawar Singh Barhat[26] (1875-1939), born at Khaira, a small hamlet near Shahpura (Rajasthan) in 1875, also played a heroic role in the revolutionary struggle for freedom. At the instance of his great brother, he joined hands with Master Amir Chand,[27] the leader of the revolutionaries in and around Delhi and worked for the famous revolutionary leader Rash Behari Bose. He took part in the Delhi Bomb outrage of December 23, 1912 in which Lord Hardinge was seriously wounded. The police made frantic efforts to get at the culprits. A reward of Rs. One lakh was announced for any one giving a clue. Finally in 1914, Amir Chand, Avadh Bihari, etc. were arrested. Despite best efforts on the part of the police, Zorawar Singh went underground and could not be apprehended.

After the bomb outrage, he took part in 'the Arrah conspiracy'. But there, too, he could not be apprehended, as he left the place soon after 'his work was done'. Finding the noose around him, too tight, however, he again went underground in the ravines of Central India and remained 'untraced' till his death in 1939.[28]

***Kunwar Pratap Singh Barhat***

The story of suffering and sacrifices of the Barhat family is not yet complete. The heroic exploits of young Pratap Singh,[29] born May 24, 1893, son of Kesari Singh and nephew of Zorawar Singh, must be told to complete it. Pratap had a revolutionary bent of mind from the very beginning. When he grew up, he joined the revolutionary movement under the influence of his father. In the movement, he worked under the guidance of Master Amir Chand and Rash Behari Bose. He took a leading part in the revolutionary work at Delhi, U.P. and Rajasthan. In Rajasthan, he tried to inspire the soldiers at Ajmer and other cantonments to rise up in revolt against the British. He also took part in the throwing of a bomb on Lord Hardinge at Delhi on December 3, 1912. He was apprehended along with others and tried in the Delhi conspiracy case. Since no evidence could be found to show his complicity in the case, he was let off. But he was

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soon arrested again for his part in the 'Benaras conspiracy case'. There was a farce of trial and he was awarded 5 years' rigorous imprisonment on February 14, 1914. He was tortured to get details about his accomplices. The twenty-two year old Charan lad underwent almost intolerable suffering at Bareilly jail like a true stoic of the *Bhagavadgītā* and did not divulge anything. The authorities tried to move him by touching a delicate cord: His mother (Shrimati Manik Kanwar) was weeping, they said, and would die, if he did not live. The young Barhat gave a brave reply even to this:

> You say that my mother is weeping day and night and is very disconsolate over my fate. But I refuse to be the cause for weeping of many other mothers. That would be death to me and disgrace to my mother.[30]

This enraged the authorities. As a result, he was tortured even more and with that came his death on May 7, 1925 in the prime of his youth – he was 22 then. His last rites took place in the jail campus.[31] Says R.C. Majumdar about him:

> By the year 1911 a number of young men joined the revolutionary organisation and some of them were sent to Delhi for training under Amir Chand, Awadh Behari and Balmukund. The most famous among these young workers was Pratap Singh, son of Barhat Kesari Singh, who played an important part in the various conspiracies organised by Rash Behari Bose. He died a martyr's death and showed unflinching courage and exemplary endurance.[32]

In 1976, the statues of the three great revolutionaries Kesari Singh, Zorawar Singh and Martyr Pratap Singh were erected at the main gate of Shahpura. It was named as Trimurti Park.

## IV
## THE 10TH JAT REGIMENT

The case of the 10th Jat Regiment was very serious and caused great consternation among the Army authorities. This Regiment had been a mixed regiment of Hindus (Brahmans, and Rajputs) and Muhammadans, but in 1892 it was formed into a 'class regiment' of Jats from Hisar, Rohtak and Jind, which were centres of the Arya Samaj.[33] As a result, a bulk of the sepoys in the regiment were either active Arya Samajists or sympathised with the Samaj. This explains how, in spite of the opposition from their officers, they could hold meetings under the auspices of the Samaj in their lines. This practice did not last long, however, because the authorities treated these meetings in the lines as 'highly objectionable' and forbade the sepoys from holding them. The sepoys swallowed the bitter pill. They gave up holding meetings in their lines and started going out to the city to attend the weekly *satsangs*. Even this was not liked by the authorities who forbade their attending the *satsangs* as well. This was intolerable for the sepoys but they bore with it for the time being.[34]

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In 1904 the regiment was shifted to Kanpur. Taking advantage of the engagements of their officers at the new station, the Arya activists again started the practice of holding weekly *satsangs*. But no sooner had they done that than the authorities forbade them to hold the *satsangs*. Not only that. The sepoys were ordered not to keep books like *Satyarth Prakash* etc. with them in the lines.[35] The patriotic fire burning in the hearts of the sepoys was thus extinguished outwardly. But inside, it was still smouldering. For instance, in 1905, when the northern region came in the grip of the *swadeshī* movement, a number of sepoys took part in the meetings held to preach *swadeshī* in Kanpur. In September of the same year, sepoy Surjan Singh, their leader, was reported by the police for attending a *swadeshī* meeting and subscribing to its funds. He was punished for this indiscipline.[36] The following year, meetings of the10th Jats and 10th Hodson's Horse were held in Infantry lines; books like *Satyarth Prakash* were read; and newspapers of political character were taken in. Lajpat Rai gave a lecture at Kanpur in the winter of 1907. Many Sepoys of the Jat regiment attended the lecture.[37]

This was a little too much for the authorities to bear with; and they asked the Arya activists to leave the Samaj and part with the sacred thread. Many obliged their officers. But there were others who were made of a stronger fibre. They wrote anonymous letters to the Commander-in-Chief seeking his intervention against 'their religious persecution'. When this did not yield any positive result, about a dozen of them came out in the open to oppose the arbitrary action of the authorities. Naik Jot Ram, the most vocal of them all, was court-martialled for insubordination and sent to jail. Ram Gopal, Ward Orderly, was discharged from service, and ten others 'were suitably punished'.[38]

In February 1908, the regiment was shifted to Alipore. The Arya Samajists were very active at the new place; and they formed links with the sepoys. One Seth Chhaju Ram,[39] a Jat multi-millionaire businessman from Alakhpura in district Hisar from where the bulk of the sepoys came, was the link between the two parties. Chhaju Ram was reported to have impressed upon the Jat Junior Commissioned Officers (JCOs) that they should always keep in mind that "when men of the regiment were guarding prisoners at Alipore jail, they were guarding their own brothers."[40]

After some time, the regiment went to Midnapore for training. As many as 39 detectives were posted by the local police to keep watch on them. The Criminal Intelligence Department sent an extra detective for this purpose. Despite all this, however, the sepoys did their work. Says Brigadier-General Cowans, who enquired into the matter later, in this regard:

> Some men of the 10th Jats had been entertained in the houses of some extremists in Midnapore... that some of the heads of the extremist party had been seen visiting the 10th Jats in their camp; and that some of the 10th Jats had been taken to see Khudiram Bose's house and had refused to give their names to a police sub-inspector who found them there...[41] he was informed by the commanding officer of the regiment that 'certain of his men were entertained by the raja of Midnapore, so notorious in the bomb case, and who narrowly escaped transportation for life.[42]

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The Junior Commissioned Officers of the regiment were at least in sympathy if not in league with the seditious sepoys. This is borne out by the following observation of the Brigadier-General, which he made while discussing the regimental C.O.'s behaviour:

> On questioning him (C.O. of the 10th Jat) regarding what was going on in the regiment, I ascertained that his Subedar-Major and other native officers were of practically no assistance to him in keeping him informed of anything undesirable (i.e., sedition in the line) that was going on, and he seemed to be entirely dependent for such information on a Muhammadan Hospital Assistant and his regimental schoolmaster (a havildar). This procedure seemed to me very unusual and I told him so, and, further, that I considered that a Subedar-Major and native officers who so little fulfilled their duty were not worth keeping in the battalion.[43]

After their annual exercises were over, the regiment came back to Ailipur, their headquarters in December 1909. Although the intelligence net was tightened around the regiment about this time, yet the Arya Activists did their job very efficiently. They visited the Arya Samaj *mandir* (temple) regularly and formed links with the Bengal revolutionaries. The authorities had no knowledge of their doings. A few of them even joined a secret revolutionary society which had its branches at Kiddarpur and Shibpur (Calcutta). Sarat Chandra Mitter, Suresh Chandra Mitter, Bhuban Mohan Mukherji, Kristo Bhan (alias Bhutan) Mukherji, Narendra Nath Chatterji, Lalit Mohan Chakravarty and Nani Gopal Gupta were the Bengali revolutionaries who had induced them to do so.[44] Before the sepoys and the revolutionaries could do anything worthwhile, one of them, Lalit Mohan Chakravarty exposed the plot hatched by the men of the 10th Jat and the revolutionaries. The plot, one of the most dangerous conspiracies ever hatched by revolutionaries, was as follows:

During the Christmas holidays in 1909, a ball was to be held at the residence of the Bengal Governor to which the Viceroy, Commander-in-Chief and all the high-ranking officers and officials of Calcutta were to be invited. The 10th Jat regiment was to do sentry duty during the ball. The undercover patriotic organisation, which had established contact with the soldiers decided to take advantage of this convenient ball to blow up the ballroom and thus destroy the colonial Government. The Consul wrote, it (conspiracy) had been intended to "arouse in the country a general perturbation of minds and thereby afford revolutionaries an opportunity to take the power in their hands." The police had suspected nothing, and it is hard to say what the outcome would have been had the soldiers not been betrayed by one of their comrades who informed the authorities about the impending coup.[45]

The Government was shocked to hear of such a serious conspiracy and at once took stringent measures against the 'culprits' who were 42 in number. They were tried by a military court-martial. The details of the punishment inflicted upon the revolutionary soldiers were as follows: By the order of the Commander-in-Chief, Hav. Chuni Lal and Sepoy Surjan Singh were dealt with summarily (summary court-martial

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under the Indian Articles of War) and sentenced to be imprisoned with hard labour for one year and to be discharged from the service; 23 Non-Commissioned Officers and men out of 145 who might apparently have been implicated, or whose characters were doubtful, were summarily dismissed. On January 31, the battalion was sent in the *R.I.M.S. Northbrook* to Karachi.

Besides these steps, Brigadier-General Cowans very strongly recommended that the constitution of the 10th Jat be changed:

> From all that I have heard recently, he said, the area of country from which they are recruited appears to possess an unusual number of leading members of the extremist or seditionist sections of the community, and there is little doubt that these men are holding out large pecuniary and other inducements to men in the native army to join what is meant to be a serious movement to attempt the downfall of the British Empire in India.[46]

Lt. Col. Pressey was sent on forced retirement for his negligent behaviour. The Subedar-Major was also sent on pension. All the subedars i.e. company commanders, were summarily discharged from service with such pensions or gratuities to which they were entitled. The recruiting of the 10th Jat was confined 'to Jats enlisted under the recruiting officer for Rajputana and Central India with a view to introducing other classes than those which have lately shown signs of disaffection.'[47]

That was, however, not the end of the story. The problem of the 10th Jat was resolved, but the influence of the Arya Samaj was not killed. It was an immensely dangerous community, the Army authorities said, for which there could not have been any place, at least in the Army. The Commander-in-Chief wrote a very strong note on March 22, 1910 to the Army Department recommending that notification be issued putting a blanket ban on the recruitment of Arya Samajists in the Army. But before that was done, he said, the permission of the Government of India be sought. In consequence, the matter was submitted to the Home Department.[48]

The Home Department gave a serious thought to the question and advised against taking any such step in haste. "To be on surer ground before such a bomb is exploded" the Home Department thought it proper to seek the opinion of the governments of Punjab and Uttar Pradesh on the question. In consequence, express communications were sent to them. The two governments took serious note of the problem and gave their considered opinion. The Punjab government said:

> Unless the Army authorities have very definite proof that Arya Samaj as a body is teaching sedition in the Army, the Lt.-Governor would deprecate any direct action against the society as a whole and would deal with individual cases as they occur i.e. anyone when found to be seditious, should be dismissed.[49]

The Uttar Pradesh Government also thought likewise. "It would be a mistake", they said, "to proscribe the whole Samaj." The Lt.-Governor expressed his inability to accept the proposal put forth by the Commander-in-Chief.[50]

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The Viceroy agreed with the observations of the home department and the governments of Punjab and U.P. and considered it inadvisable to proscribe the entire Arya Samaj for being seditious. It was left to the Army department to tackle the problem of recruitment of undesirable elements in the Army thoughtfully. Accordingly, the Commander-in-Chief devised a novel remedy to the problem. Addressing an Army Order to all the General Officers Commanding divisions and independent brigades and all recruiting officers, he observed:

> In view of the maintenance of discipline, good order and loyalty in the Indian Army and to prevent discord and dissension arising among the Native ranks, it is desired all Commanding Officers and Recruiting Officers to carry out the policy of Government in carefully restricting the enlistment in units to the classes duly authorised to form their composition. To illustrate this I am to point out that as in a Hindu Rajput Company Mohammedan Rajputs are not enlisted and as Brahmins who are Sikhs are not eligible for regiments enlisting Brahmins, so in the case of companies for which Jats are authorised, steps should be taken to prevent the enlistment of Jats who have changed their religion to that of the Sikhs, Vishnois, Brahmo Samajists, Arya-Samajists, or of any other sect, and this rule should be applied to all classes enlisted in the Indian Army.[51]

Thus the enlistment of Arya Samajists was forbidden in the Army. No relaxation was made even during the First World War, 1914-18, when they were in dire need of recruits, as the following letter written to *The Tribune* by Sir Chhotu Ram, an eminent Jat leader of Rohtak, on May 8, 1917 shows:

> The other day, an Arya Samajist offered himself for enlistment in the Army. He was asked to put off his sacred thread as a condition precedent. He refused to comply with his demand, and was rejected in consequence.[52]

Arya Samaj became a byword for what they called 'sedition' insofar as Army was concerned. Some Army Officers seemed to have completely lost their balance of mind at that time. To them every person who took up a bold attitude or displayed independence in his behaviour appeared to be an Arya Samajist. A young Lieutenant in a regiment entered into an argument with his *Jamādār* who was a Muslim. He reported his conduct to the commanding officer. The Colonel summoned the *Jamādār* to his presence and said: "Well! *Badmāsh* Arya Samajist, why did you speak rudely to the *Sahib*"? "I am a Mussalman, Sir!" replied the *Jamādār*. The Colonel did not cool down and retorted: "Well then! You are a Mussalman Arya Samajist." The poor fellow suffered reprimand for 'being an 'Arya Samajist'.'[53] The British felt uneasy in the presence of the Arya Samajists, always and everywhere, till the advent of Independence, 1947.

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## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash* (English translation *The Light of Truth* by Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya, 2005), Arya Prakashan, Ajmeri Gate, Delhi, chapter VIII, p. 279.
2. These excerpts have been taken from the autobiography of the great martyr Ram Prasad Bismil (*Ātmakathā: Ram Prasad Bismil,* ed. Banarasi Das Chaturvedi, 2015, Atmaram and Sons, Delhi, pp. 28-34, 37-38), written in death cell till two days before being hanged on the altar of Mother India.
3. Inderjit was initiated in to Sannyāsa by Mahatma Narayan Swami and given the name Swami Vishuddhanand.
4. According to Shiv Verma, Ram Prasad Bismil used to perform *havan* daily. He never missed reciting *Gāyatrī* and performing *havan* except for those days when it could not have been possible due to involvement in revolutionary activities. see Dinesh Sharma and Asha Joshi (editors), 1997, *Ram Prasad Bismil Rachnāwalī,* Swaran Jayanti, Delhi, *Vishesh Parichya,* p. 28.); Ram Prasad Bismil's copper Havan Kund (top 2" square, bottom 6" square and depth 3"), bamboo stick (*lāthee*) (four and a half feet, bottom circumference 2" top circumference 6"), knife (9.5"), *Mrigchhāla* and one blanket used in Jail, were presented to Gurukul Jhajjar (Haryana) by his sister, Shastri Devi.
5. Giuseppe Mazzini (1805-1872), was an Italian politician, journalist and activist who worked for unification of Italy. His efforts helped bring about the independent and unified Italy, in place of the several separate states, many dominated by foreign powers, that existed until the 19th century. He also helped define the modern European movement for popular democracy in a republican state.
6. Raja Mahendra Pratap (1886-1979) was an eminent patriot. He became famous as *Arya Peshawa* Raja Mahendra. The pāthshālā established by Rishi Dayanand in Farrukhabad was shifted to Vrindavan on the land donated by him and named as Gurukul (see Ram Prakash, Dr., 2012, *Guru Virjanand Dandi,* Satyarth Prakashan, Kurukshetra, p. 40, f.n. 20).
7. Bismil writes in his *Ātmakathā,* "You (Ashfaq Ulla Khan) became like my younger brother within a few days... You became my true friend. Everybody was astonished to see the deep relationship between a staunch Arya Samajist and a Mussalman. I used to perform *Shuddhi* of Mussalmans. I was staying in Arya Samaj Mandir but you never worried about such matter... You used to visit me in the Arya Samaj Mandir. (see *Ātmakathā: Ram Prasad Bismil,* pp. 86-88).
8. Dinesh Sharma and Asha Joshi (editors), *op. cit.*, p. 30.
9. Shiv Verma in disguise was present along with Mataji.
10. Dinesh Sharma and Asha Joshi (editors), *op. cit.*, inside page of the outer cover.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 30-31.
12. See Virendra Sindhu, 2000, *Yugadraṣṭā Bhagat Singh aur unke Mṛtyuñjaya Purakhe,* Rajpal and Sons, Delhi, pp. 15-25; Sardar Arjun Singh used to perform Havan daily very regularly. He would keep Havan kuṇḍ with him even while travelling. A very interesting incident in this regard has been mentioned by Yashpal, 1964, a revolutionary associate of Bhagat Singh in his book *Sinhāvalokan* (Viplav Karyalaya, Lucknow, pp. 23-25).
13. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
14. Sardar Arjun Singh (grandfather of Bhagat Singh), *Hamāre Guru Sāhibān Vedon ke Pero The* (Urdu), Pindi Das Pustak Bhandar, Lahore. Its Hindi version edited by Dr. Ram Prakash is expected soon.
15. Virendra Sindhu, *op. cit.*, p. 22.
16. He was a disciple of Swami Dayanand who appointed him Secretary of Paropkarini Sabha, Ajmer. However, he could not serve in that capacity for a long time due to his ill health. Several letters written by him to Swamiji and vice-versa are available. He was honoured with the title of Kaviraja and Mahamahopadhyaya. For details see Krishna Singh Barhat, 2009,

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*Barhat Krishna Singh ka Jeevan-Charitra aur Rajputana ka Apoorva Itihas*, parts III, Scientific Publisher India, Jodhpur, pp. 27-31.

17. See *Rishi Dayanand ke Patra aur Vijñāpan*, 4 volumes (ed. Pandit Bhagavaddatta and Yudhishthira Mimamsaka, 1980-1983), Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Bahalgarh, Sonepat.
18. After independence, the *Bārhat Jī kī Havelī* was returned to the family and it was declared National Memorial in 1972. see Krishna Singh Barhat, *op. cit.*, part-III, p. xiii.
19. *Ibid.*, parts I-III, Scattered on various pages.
20. (a) Sumnesh Joshi, *Rajasthan mein Swatantratā Saṅgrām ke Senānī*, Dictionary of National Biography, Vol. I, pp. 13-20.
    (b) *Krāntikārī Barhat Kesari Singh: Vyaktitva aur Krititva*, 2 parts, Hindi Sahitya Akadmi, Udaipur.
21. Sumnesh Joshi, *op.cit.*, pp. 13-18.
22. Kesari Singh Barhat wrote the following 13 couplets (known as *Chetawani ra chungatya)* which exhorted Maharana Fateh Singh not to attend the Delhi *Durbar.* (http://www.gyandarpan.com/2009/10/blog-post_29.html)

पग पग भ्रम्या पहाड, धरा छोड राख्यो धरम।
(ईसू) महाराणा'र मेवाड़, हिरदै बसिया हिन्द रै।।1।।

Facing formidable difficulties, the Maharana of Mewar roamed in the mountains. He left his own land but stood by dharma that is why the Maharana is dearly loved by all the Indians.

घणा घलिया घमासांण, (तोई) राणा सदा रहिया निडर।
(अब) पेखँतां, फ़रमाण हलचल किम फ़तमल! हुवै ।।2।।

The Maharana of Mewar fought countless battles but he was unfazed and fearless. But it defies belief, Maharana Fateh Singh that a brave man like you born in an illustrious family got destabilised by a small *faramāna* of Lord Carzen.

गिरद गजो घमसांण, नहचै धर माई नहीं।
(ऊ) मावै किम महाराणा, गज दोसै रा गिरद मे ।।3।।

In the fierce battles fought by the Maharanas, the dust raised by the elephants' feet could not be contained. How can the same Maharana get accommodated in 200 yards in the functions mounted by the British?

ओरां ने आसान, हांका हरवळ हालणों।
(पणा) किम हालै कुल राणा, (जिण) हरवळ साहाँ हांकिया ।।4।।

It is very easy for other Rajas and Maharajas to be seated in the front rows. But how will such a row be fitting for the Maharana whose ancestors till now routed the soldiers of the enemy army?

नरियंद सह नजरांण, झुक करसी सरसी जिकाँ।
(पण) पसरैलो किम पाण, पाणा छतां थारो फ़ता! ।।5।।

The other rulers will bow and pay obeisance to the British rulers and will go forward to give them fealty. They have always bowed but O, brave Sisodia Maharana, you always have a sword in your hand, how will you bow before the British and give them fealty? Those who have never bent before anybody how will they do it today?

सिर झुकिया सह शाह, सींहासण जिण साम्हने।
(अब) रळनो पंगत राह, फ़ाबै किम तोने फ़ता! ।।6।।

O Maharana Fateh Singh! How will you join the ranks of the Rajas whose heads are bowed? You are from the Sisodia family to whom Raja, Maharaja, Rao, Umrao and Kings paid obeisance.

सकल चढावे सीस, दान धरम जिण रौ दियौ।
सो खिताब बखसीस, लेवण किम ललचावसी ।।7।।

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How will the Maharanas who gave donations and jagirs which people gratefully accepted accept the titles given by the British?

देखेला हिंदवाण, निज सूरज दिस नह सूं।

पण "तारा" परवाण, निरख निसासान्हांकसी ॥8॥

O Maharana Fateh Singh! All the Hindus consider you the 'Sun of the Hindutva'. When they will look affectionately at you, their Sun, you will look like a star (Star of India). What will they think? It will put them to shame.

देखे अंजस दीह, मुळकेलो मनही मनां।

दंभी गढ़ दिल्लीह, सीस नमंताँ सीसवद ॥9॥

When the arrogant Britishers will see the Hindutva Sun, Sisodia Maharana Fateh Singh, bowing before them, then their vain supremo Lord Curzon will be happy in his hearts of heart and will think that those Maharanas of Mewar who never bowed before anyone are today bowing before me.

अंत बेर आखीह, पताल जे बाताँ पहल।

(वे) राणा सह राखीह, जिण री साखी सिर जटा ॥10॥

In the last day of his life your head of family Maharana Pratap made some resolutions (not bowing before anyone, never giving reverence to Delhi, eating in banana leafs, never cut their hair – customs which are being observed by your ancestors), O Maharana Fateh Singh, your long hair are witness to these.

"कठिण जमानो" कौल, बाँधे नर हीमत बिना।

(यो) बीराँ हंदो बोल, पातल साँगे पेखियो ॥11॥

O Maharana!, when a person loses courage, he says the times are difficult. It is not possible to uphold these promises anymore. Those who are brave, their words are important. People have identified Maharana Sanga, Kumbha and Maharana Pratap as such brave souls.

अब लग सारां आस, राण रीत कुळ राखसी।

रहो सहाय सुखरास, एकलिंग प्रभु आप रै ॥12॥

O Maharana Fateh Singhji! the people of India have expectations from you that you will uphold the traditions of the Maharanas and will not bow before anyone as per the oath of Maharana Pratap. The God Eklinga will be with you in this act.

मान मोद सीसोद, राजनित बळ राखणो।

(ई) गवरमेन्टरी गोद, फ़ळ मिठा दिठा फ़ता ॥13॥

O Maharana Sisodia, your pride and joy shall be maintained by the power of politics. By endearing yourself to this Government, you are hoping for sweet fruit which really is sour, not sweet.

These couplets had the desired affect; and the Maharana returned from Delhi without attending the *Durbar.*

23. R. C. Majumdar, 1962, *History of Freedom Movement in India*, vol. II, Firma, Calcutta.
24. *Ibid.*
25. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kesari_Singh_Barahath.
26. Sumnesh Joshi, *op.cit.*, pp. 37-40.
27. He was a staunch Arya Samajist from Delhi and was hanged on May 11, 1915 in the Ambala Jail.
28. R. C. Majumdar, *op.cit.*,
29. *Ibid.*, p. 313.
30. K.C. Ghosh, 1965, *The Role of Honour: Anecdotes of Indian Martyres*, Vidya Bhavan Culcutta, pp. 291-292.
31. Nagender Bala, in Foreword to *Barhat Krishna Singh ka Jeevan-Charitra aur Rajputana kā Apoorva Itihāsa*, part-I, pp. ii – iv.

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32. R.C. Majumdar, *op. cit.*,
33. See for instance, the following report from the deputy commissioner, Hisar, the most important recruiting district for the 10th Jat:
"The Arya Samaj is not a religious body, it is a purely political association, and the policy pursued in this district is to foster discontent by raising up imaginary grievances and wherever any real grievance exists, to magnify it a hundred fold. In short, the preaching of discontent among the peasantry is the line chiefly taken... A more or less organized system of Arya preachers itinerating in village schools does exist, and the village schools are favourite places of theirs for the preaching. Of late a strongly organized crusade in favour of Arya Samaj was made under the directions of Lajpat Rai who is himself of Hissar. At the schools, at the mills...and later in the villages on return on leave or furlough the recruit and the sepoy have daily opportunities of hearing the tenets of the Arya Samaj... a purely political body."
vide National Archives of India (hereafter NAI), Home Political (conf.), Deposit, No. 7 August 1910.
34. *Ibid.*
35. *Ibid.*
36. *Ibid.*
37. *Ibid.*
38. *Ibid.*
39. He was treasurer of the Calcutta Arya Samaj (now known as Arya Samaj, 10 Vidhan Sarani, Kolkata)
40. NAI Home Political (conf.), Deposit, No. 7, August 1910.
41. *Ibid.*
42. *Ibid.*
43. *Ibid.*
44. *Ibid.*
45. R.C. Majumdar, *op. cit.*, pp. 281-82.
46. NAI Home Political (conf.) Deposit, No. 7, August 1910.
47. *Ibid.*
48. *Ibid.*
49. *Ibid.*
50. *Ibid.*
51. *Ibid.*
52. *The Tribune*, May 8, 1917.
53. Munshiram and Ramdev, 1910, *The Arya Samaj and Its Detractors: A Vindication*, Lahore, p. 98.

(Sections I and II, translated from Hindi to English by A.K. Anand)

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# CHAPTER 15

# Maharshi Dayanand's Role in the Uplift of Dalits

*Kushal Dev Shastri*

Caste-based discrimination is a glaring example of the social injustice committed by one set of people against another – much the same as slavery, colour prejudice and racism. The Shudras and the other low-caste Hindus, have had to bear for centuries, humiliation and oppression due to social, economic and political discrimination. Those who professed to worship the gods even in the statues made of stone, suppressed their fellow humans, the creations of God himself, for many millennia, on the basis of caste. How ironic, that on the one hand, snakes were worshipped and offered milk, and on the other, in the name of religion, the Shudras were even denied drinking water from the village-well! The basis for this caste-based socio-economic discrimination was said to be the Shāstras, which the so-called lower castes were not even permitted to touch, let alone study. In the face of such inhuman discrimination, the only escape possible for the Shudras was either death or the conversion to other religions.

In these circumstances, Dayanand took two revolutionary initiatives against caste-based discrimination. Firstly, he declared that all humans including the Shudras have the right to study the Vedas. Secondly, he proved that the caste system based on birth was not in accordance with the Vedic *shāstras,* which instead speak of a *varṇa-vyavasthā* based on *guṇa* (attributes and competence), *karma* (deeds, actions) and *svabhāva* (nature or temperament). Many social reformers had earlier spoken of giving equality to Shudras on human and compassionate grounds, but nobody had ever shaken up the very root of this discrimination like Dayanand did. Despite being born a Brahman himself, he not only rubbished the whole system of caste by birth but also demolished its very sanction on the basis of the Shāstras. Therefore in the arena of the uplift of Dalits, Rishi Dayanand is not just a social reformer, but a revolutionary extraordinaire!

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## THE UPLIFT OF DALITS: SOME DEFINITIONS

In the context of the uplift of Dalits, some of the oft repeated terms are *Varṇa-vyavasthā, Shuddhi, Harijan, Dalit* and *Acchutoddhār.* These terms require some clarification for a proper understanding.

### *Varṇa–vyavasthā*

Since ancient times, people with various inclinations and potentials were classified into four categories – Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra. The expectation from Brahmans was intellectual leadership. Kshatriyas were classified as warriors. Vaishyas, being the business class, were expected to bring in prosperity and Shudras were to provide labour and physical inputs.

The central question regarding the *varṇa-vyavasthā* is, whether it was based on birth or on one's potential and deeds? Unlike the present caste system, the *varṇa-vyavasthā* was based, not on birth, but on *guṇa* (attributes and competence), *karma* (deeds, actions) and *svabhāva* (temperament). Accordingly, the son of a Brahman was downgraded as Shudra if his *guṇa, karma* and *svabhāva* did not match that of the Brahmans. Similarly, there are several examples where the son of a Shudra attained Brahmanhood because of his *guṇa, karma* and *svabhāva.* Thus the *varṇa–vyavasthā* was fundamentally different from the system of caste by birth.[1]

### *Shuddhi*

There is no authentic information about how and when the word *Shuddhi* was accepted for the conversion from one sect to another. Indra Vidyavachaspati is of the opinion that possibly some reporter used this word in the context of entry to Vedic Dharma and it must have gained currency. While analysing the word *Shuddhi,* he clarifies that it is against Rishi Dayanand's perception to consider a Hindu, no matter how fallen, as *shuddh* (pure) and that the non-believer, even if he is a thorough gentleman, not as *shuddh.* Rishi Dayanand laid emphasis not only on the purity of thoughts but also on good conduct, deeds and *sātvika* habits. He never thought adversely of foreign travel or interaction with foreigners. For him, undesirable food and thoughts were sinful. The word *shuddhi* was in the beginning used for the conversion of Muslims and Christians to Hinduism. Several communities such as Rehtiya (Weaver), Odd, Ded, Doom, and Megh were considered as outcasts. The word *Shuddhi* was used in the context of their uplift during 1888–1915.[2] Over time, to distinguish the Dalits from others, the word *Dalitoddhār* (uplift of Dalits) came into vogue. The word *Shuddhi* remained confined to those from other faiths.[3]

### *Dalit and Dalitoddhār*

Before the uplift of Dalits, the prevalent word for them was *acchuta* (untouchable). The Arya Samjists were against untouchability and coined the term *Dalits* (downtrodden). Untouchability was a stigma on the society. The term *Dalit* was more appropriate as it

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was the duty of the society to undo the injustice that had been perpetrated on a large section of society. Thus a change in the mind-set led to change in the terminology too.

Those who had been suppressed socially and economically for a long time came to be known as Dalits. According to Pandit Indra Vidyavachaspati, it was gradually felt that *Shuddhi* (conversion) and uplift of Dalits, were not one and the same thing; for the pitiable condition of Dalits only the so-called high castes were responsible, who on the basis of caste-by-birth had created millions of untouchables. To restore their human rights was the duty of humanity. With this view, the Arya Samajists used the term *Dalitoddhār* (uplift of the Dalits).[4] Since then, the word has become prevalent. Between 1917 and 1924, Swami Shraddhanand made Delhi the centre from where he was fully involved in the cause of Dalit uplift, and founded the 'Dalit Uddhār Sabha'. It was at this time that the Arya Samaj gave powerful and apt words like *Dalit* and *Dalitoddhār* to the Dalit uplift movement. In due course of time, Dr. Ambedkar adopted this terminology and made it more vital.

***Harijan***

Mahatma Gandhi termed the untouchables, Harijan (people of Hari or God). He gave impetus to this movement through the periodical 'Harijan'. Mahatma Gandhi thought that those who have no one else have Hari and are hence Harijans.[5] Surely when Gandhiji gave this name, with good intentions and wanted to coin a positive term for the untouchables but Dr. Ambedkar did not like this nomenclature, as being a non-believer Buddhist, he did not believe in the existence of God. Mahatma Gandhi unlike Swami Dayanand believed in the caste structure based on birth and not on *guṇa, karma* and *svabhāva.* For Dr. Ambedkar, Swami Shraddhanand and other Arya Samajist leaders were more reliable as compared to political leaders.[6] There must have been such reasons that instead of 'Harijan' the term 'Dalit' was more acceptable to him. Today, the followers of Dr. Ambedkar consider the term Harijan inappropriate. According to Pandit Indra Vidyavachaspati, it is unacceptable to give the name Harijan simply on the basis of birth and to set them apart as a separate entity.[7] This word is not suitable from the view point of equality of all humans, and is also harmful from a practical angle.

## DALIT UPLIFT AND THE CLASSICS

***The Basis of Varṇa***

Rishi Dayanand was the first eminent personality who declared and proved that social stratification or *varṇa-vyavasthā* had to be based on one's attributes, actions, and temperament (*guṇa, karma, svabhāva*) and not on birth. He also accepted the principle of change of *varṇa* on the basis of scriptures.[8]

Rishi Dayanand held that caste system by birth was not very ancient, and hence could not be called *sanātana* or perennial. For him, all men are born equal and everyone becomes entitled to only what he does. It has been said - *Janmanā jāyate śūdraḥ sanskārād dvija ucyate,*[9] which means that all are born equal as Shudras and it through

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the Sanskārs that one becomes a *dwij*, the one who is born twice. In other words, one becomes a Brahman, not by birth but only through learning and good deeds.

Rishi Dayanand Saraswati declared clearly in Svamantavyāmantavyaprakāsh in Satyarth Prakash, "I believe in the *varṇas* (four classes of the human society) based on *guṇa* and *karma*."[10] While defining the *varṇa*, Swami Dayanand states in Āryoddeshyaratnamālā that *varṇa* is due to one's merits and actions.[11] It has been further clarified in Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā,

> firstly the whole mankind is one... its four divisions in Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra are called *varṇas*... the four divisions are on the basis of merits and actions... they are called *varṇas* because one is appointed to a particular *varṇa* on the basis of merits and actions.[12]

The Nirukta says the word *varṇa* is derived from the root *vri*, to choose, to appoint. It, therefore, means one to be chosen, worthy of choice, or that to which one is appointed or elected with due regards to his attributes and works.[13]

***Movement from one Varṇa to another***

Not only did Rishi Dayanand reject the system of caste-by-birth, he, importantly, also believed in the movement from one caste to another.

In 1880, someone discussed the issue of caste with the Maharshi. In reply, he said nobody can be a Brahman by birth. If that be so, then if out of the two sons of a Brahman one becomes a Muslim and the other a Christian, will they still be considered Brahmans? If no, then where is Brahmanism? In the fourth chapter of Satyarth Prakash, Swami Dayanand clearly states:

> A low-born ascends to a higher *varṇa* by doing righteous deeds. He should be counted of the same *varṇa*, for which he is fit. Similarly, by doing unrighteous deeds, a man born in higher class descends to a lower class for which he is fit and should be regarded as such... the *varṇas* can keep intact their respective purity by adhering to their own merits, profession and temperament, i.e., nobody should live like a *Kshatriya* or a *Shudra* in a Brahman's family. The *Kshatriya, Vaishya* and *Shudra varṇas* will also maintain their purity in this way.[14]

An individual should be given a right to a *varṇa* on the basis of his or her faculties. By this definition, everybody becomes progressive.

> The upper classes will always bear in mind that if their children would remain ignorant, they would have to go down to the level of the Shudras. These children will also fear that if they would not keep up their level of conduct and will not acquire education, they would be compelled to be classed as Shudras.[15]

Swami Dayanand further says:

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The duty of disseminating knowledge and propagating piety should be entrusted to the Brahmans, as being learned and righteous, they alone are fit for this task. The state can never come to loss or disruption if the task of government is entrusted to the *Kshatriyas.* The right of cattle–breeding etc. fitly belongs to the *Vaishyas,* because they are most suitable for this work. The task of service is given to the *Shudra* only for the reason that he being uneducated cannot do any work requiring knowledge. But bodily service he can easily do.[16]

***The Scriptural basis of Varṇa-vyavasthā***

In Sanskārvidhi in the context of *Gṛhasthāshram,* Swami Dayanand has written keeping the *Gita* and *Manusmriti* as basis that those who have the requisite qualities should be *Brahman* and *Brahmanī.* The marriages should also be arranged on basis of *guṇa, karma* and *svabhāva.* He has similarly spoken about *Kshatriyas, Vaishya* and *Shudras.*

Rishi Dayanand, on the basis of Chāndogyopaniṣad, Mahābhārata and his own arguments, has presented the scriptural basis for *varṇa-vyavasthā* in Satyarth Prakash in a question-answer form as under:

Q: Is only that person Brahman or Brahmanī (female Brahman) whose parents are Brahmans? Can the children of non–Brahman parents be ever Brahmans?

Ans.: Yes, they have been, they are and they shall be. The Chāndogyopaniṣad quotes the instance of sage Jabali who belonged to uncertain family and yet became a Brahman. Similarly, according to the Mahābhārata, Vishvamitra, belonging to a Kshatriya family and sage Matanga, belonging to a very low chandāla family, became Brahmans. Even now only that man is fit to be called a Brahman who is learned and of good habits, and an ignorant man deserves to be called a Shudra. The same thing holds good even in case of future.[17]

Q: What is the proof that you think rightly and we think wrongly?

Ans.: The proof is quite evident. You call that practice tradition which has been current for five or seven generations. We call only that practice as tradition which has been current since the very birth of the universe, i.e., the Vedas. Don't you see that good parents beget bad children, or bad parents good children, or good parents good children and bad parents bad children?

Why do you not acknowledge that man as Brahman, who abandons the duties of his *varṇa* and becomes low, or is converted into Islam or Christianity? You have only one answer. The man has left the duties of Brahmans, therefore, he is not a Brahman. This proves that those born Brahmans who do good actions are Brahmans and those low-born also whose merits, profession and temperament are of higher *varṇas* are also of higher varṇas. Similarly, high-born persons doing low things should be reckoned in the low *varṇa.*[18]

Q: If a man has only one son or daughter and that one happens to join another *varṇa,* then who will attend to the wants of the parents? It will be the end of the family also. What arrangement should there be?

Ans.: Neither there will be lack of attendance not loss of family; as they will get in exchange of their sons and daughters suitable heirs by the arrangement of the educational and political departments. The fixture of the *varṇas* according to

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merits and actions should take place at the sixteenth year of girls and twenty-fifth year of boys. Marriages also should take place in their own *varṇas*, i.e., a Brahman man should be married to a Brahman woman; a Kshatriya to a Kshatriya, a Vaishya to a Vaishya, and a Shudra to a Shudra. This will maintain the integrity of each *varṇa* as well as good relations.[19]

Both on the basis of *Shāstras* and logic, Rishi Dayanand proved that the *varṇa* is not by birth, but by competence and deeds. He firmly believed that caste discrimination is result of the derailing of *varṇa* based on competence and deeds by the prevalence of birth based caste system. According to him for the uplift of society, it is imperative that we oppose the birth theory and uphold the *varṇa–vyavasthā* as per *guṇa* and *karma*.

Way back in 1867, Rishi Dayanand unfurled the *Pākhaṇḍa–khaṇḍanī* flag at Haridwar, and like Angad, he stood firm against the caste system by birth. The famous Pandit Vishuddhanand of Kashi was also present at that Kumbh Mela. When he quoted the famous mantra *Brāhmaṇo'sya mukhamāsīd... padbhyāṁ śudro ajāyata*[20] and interpreted that the Brahman is born out of the mouth of God; the Kshatriyas out of His arms; The Vaishya out of His thighs and the Shudras out of His feet, Rishi Dayanand countered him, saying that this was not the correct interpretation. He said "the correct meaning of the verse is that in this world of the all-pervading God, whoever is the most virtuous like the mouth, is a Brahman; whoever has bodily power is a Kshatriya; and so on."[21] This makes it amply clear that Swami Dayanand right from the beginning of his public life believed and propagated *varṇa-vyavasthā* according to *karma* and not by birth.

In order to prove caste structure by birth, someone in 1880 presented the following shloka from Mahābhārata:

*Tapaḥ śrutaṁ ca yoniścetyetad brāhmaṇakārakam.*
*Tapaḥśrutābhyāṁ yo hīno jātibrāhmaṇa eva saḥ.*[22]

Meaning: there are three attributes of Brahmanhood – penance, vidyā and birth. One who is without penance and vidyā is Brahman only by birth. Rishi Dayanand contradicted it on the authority of Manu:

*Yathā kāṣṭhamayo hastī yathā carmamayo mṛgaḥ,*
*yaśca viṗro'nadhīyānastrayaste nāma bibhrati.*[23]

Meaning: As an elephant made of wood or as a deer made of leather, so is a man destitute of knowledge. He is a man only in name. Rishi Dayanand has presented this concept in Sanskārvidhi too.

## STEPS FOR THE EMANCIPATION OF DALITS

***Measures adopted by Rishi Dayanand for Dalit Emancipation***

*Jñānānmuktiḥ*,[24] so says Sāmkhya Darśana. The salvation of human beings is not possible without knowledge. Therefore in the context of the uplift of Dalits, Rishi Dayanand's most significant contribution was that he made *Veda Vidyā* accessible to the Dalits also. The injunctions that were imposed upon the Dalits for the study of Vedas, in the middle

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ages, were declared anti–Vedic by Rishi Dayanand, through his path-breaking thinking and personal example.

In this one act of seminal thinking, of allowing the study of Vedas to Dalits, is the quintessence of all other measures taken for the uplift of Dalits, which include:
(a) Preaching Gāyatrī mantra to women and untouchables,
(b) Performing their *Upanayana Sanskār*,
(c) Giving them the right to perform Havan,
(d) Giving them equal rights in educational institutions towards education and dress,
(e) Eating food cooked by the Dalits and eating along with them,
(f) Encouraging youth on the threshold of marriage to marry on the basis of qualities instead of caste.

***Rishi Dayanand's Practical Role in Dalitoddhār***

Rishi Dayanand was the same in thought, speech and deed. He not only propagated his beliefs through lectures and writings, but gave them substance in practical life also. We find his progressive spirit at every step. A few instances of his life may be quoted here in this context.

In 1867, he ate the half bread offered by a Mānjhī (considered to be of an untouchable low caste) at Garhmukteshwar.[25] In 1868, he accepted the curry and rice brought by Sukhwasilal Sādh at Farrukhabad. He enjoyed the food offered by a barber in full public view in 1872 at Anupshahr. In 1874, he readily spared his precious time to go to Beswan in district Aligarh to correct the translation of Yajurvedabhāshya by Guru Ram Prasad (Jat).[26] In 1874, he frankly told Bhakt Thakur Prasad, "I do not believe in untouchability, you also keep out of it."[27] In this very year, he gladly accepted *Jowar* roasted in fire from the farmers of Katar village in Gujarat.[28] On July 16, 1875, he delivered a Vedic sermon in a school of low caste Shudras on the written request of Govind Meena, Gopal Chamar, Raghu Meher etc.[29] In 1878, a Muslim Postman abused a Mazhabi Sikh for listening to Swamiji's lecture, but the Swami affectionately invited him to his Vedic discourses.[30] He established the Arya Samaj not for any particular caste, sect or class but for the welfare of the whole mankind. Dayanand was concerned not only about his own salvation, but of others also.

Rishi Dayanand who had performed the *Upanayana Sanskār* of Harish Chandra Chintamani's daughter in 1876 at Mumbai[31] and earlier of Hansa Devi Thakur at Calcutta whom he gave a discourse of Gāyatrī mantra, did the same for Munshi Mukhtawar Singh, Munshi Samarthdan and Lala Shadiram.

It must not be forgotten that before Rishi Dayanand and particularly in the middle ages everybody other than Brahmans was considered Shudra. Therefore gradually in Mughal and British periods, Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj of Maharashtra,[32] Sayajirao Gaekwad of Baroda and Rajarishi Sahu of Kolapur had to face privation because of the reluctance of Brahmans to perform Vedic rituals. In 1880, at Danapur an attendant saw Rishi Dayanand walking around at midnight and enquired the reason for his discomfort. Rishi Dayanand replied, "The Christians are trying to convert the Dalits to Christians and spending money like water while our leaders are not bothered. This is worrying me."[33]

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Two Sadhus met Rishi Dayanand during the last days of his life in 1882 and requested, "Kindly preach only to the deserving." He replied,

> In the context of religious discourse, the question of deserving and undeserving is irrelevant. It is the right of every human being to listen to the religious sermons. In your caste, so many people are giving up faith and you are discussing the issue of deserving and undeserving. First, save them.[34]

Encapsulating this message of Dayanand, Kunwar Sukhlal Arya Musafir, wrote a couplet,

*Lo Daliton ko chhātī lagā bhāīyo, varnā ye lāl gairon ke ghar jāenge.*
*Gar muhabbat kā maraham lagāte rahe, zakhme dil ek din inke bhar jāenge.*

Meaning: Embrace the Dalits otherwise these loved ones will go to others. With the balm of love their wounds will heal one day.

The Arya Samajists adopted the Dalits and taught them the Veda mantras. Impressed with the steps taken in this direction, the Vice-Chancellor of Dr. Ambedkar Marathwada University, Shivaji Rao Bhonsle has written, "Away from the highway in an obscure village if you find someone with a Dalit girl child in his lap teaching Gāyatrī mantra, you can conclude that he is a follower of Dayanand and Arya Samaj."[35]

***Dalit Emancipator Dayanand in the Eyes of Others***

Babu Devendranath Mukhopadhyaya who spent almost fifteen years, researching the life and times of Dayanand writes, "by denying them access to Vedas, women and untouchables were deprived of education and this is how the Mahants established their hegemony, misled the public and pushed the country to abysmal depths. Dayanand was sent to the world to break these shackles and liberate humanity."[36] Pandit Satyavrat Samshrami who was present during Kashi Shāstrarth, admitted clearly, *Śūdrasya vedādhikāre sākṣāt vedavacanamapi pradarśitaṁ svāmidyānandena – yathemāṁ vācaṁ ...*[37] i.e. Rishi Dayanand has demonstrated the right of the Shudras to study the Vedas directly from the Veda mantra

*Yathemāṁ vācaṁ kalyāṇīmāvadāni janebhyaḥ,*
*Brahmarājānyābhyāṁ śūdrāya cāryāya ca svāya cāraṇāya.*[38]

According to Pandit Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya, had Rishi Dayanand given only this mantra and not done Vedabhāshya at all, this alone was enough for the uplift of Vedic culture.[390] Dr. Chandrabhanu Sonavane writes, "In the middle ages, the Paurāṇics established their right to Vedic learning. Swamiji was the seer to understand the real meaning of this Yajurveda mantra."[40]

Exactly ten years after the death of Rishi Dayanand, paying a tribute to him Dada Saheb Khapde wrote, "Swamiji brought out the treasure house of Vedas for the entire humanity which was hidden in the temples. He gave great impetus to the spread of Hindu Dharma through his capability.[41]

Dr. Sudhir Kumar Gupt in his thesis entitled, *'Dayananda's Contribution to Vedic Exegesis'*, states, "Through his Vedabhāshya in Hindi Swamiji rendered Vedic knowledge as a public property."

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In the words of Pandit Chamupati, "Nobody was untouchable in the eyes of Dayanand – whether it be Umeda Nai or Malkana Rustom Singh. His compassionate arms uplifted them from the dark depths and placed them on the sacred heights of Aryatva."[42] The famous Hindi poet, Suryakant Tripathi Nirala wrote,

> Nobody except Swami Dayanand and Arya Samaj has made an equal contribution towards fresh thinking regarding women, down-trodden and discrimination on the basis of caste in this country. The awakening we see today in India – its sole credit goes to Arya Samaj.[43]

Even Dr. Ambedakar has accepted, "The varṇa-vyavasthā proposed by Swami Dayanand is reasonable and non-problematic."[44]

Lakshman Shastri Joshi, the compiler of Marathi Encyclopedia, eulogising Swami Dayanand wrote,

> For centuries, because of the weakness of Hindu Dharma, India was enslaved. Swami Dayanand correctly experienced it. Therefore, he preached Arya Dharma to condemn caste difference by birth and to highlight the evil traditions like idol worship. If people of the calibre of Dayanand had been born thousand years earlier, India would not have had to see the days of slavery of the country. Not only this, India would have risen as a great nation in the world.[45]

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8. The Chāndogyopaniṣad quotes the instance of sage Jābāli who belonged to uncertain family and yet became a Brahman. Similarly, according to the Mahābhārata, Vishvāmitra, belonging to a Kshatriya family and sage Matanga, belonging to a very low Chandāla family, became Brahmans.
9. Even *Skanda-purāṇa* (Nagar Khand, 239.31) mentions that जन्मना जायते शूद्रः संस्काराद् द्विज उच्यते।
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11. Maharshi Dayanand, *Āryoddeshyaratnamālā* (Tr. Bawa Arjan Singh), Vedic Yantralaya, Ajmer, p. 13.
12. Swami Dayanand, 1969, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Varṇāshramavisyaḥ*, Arsh Sahitya Prachar Trust, Delhi, p. 234.
13. *Nirukta*, 2.3; *Varṇo vṛṇoteḥ*.
14. Swami Dayanand, *Satyarth Prakash*, p. 115.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 118.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 119.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 111.
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19. *Ibid.*, p. 115.
20. *Yajurveda*, 31.11
21. Devendranath Mukhopadhyaya, 2050 Vikrami, *Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati kā Jivan Charitra*, Govindram Hasanand, Delhi, p. 119.
22. *Mahābhāshyam*, part III, chapter II (ed. Yudhishthira Mimamsaka), 2012, Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Revali, Sonepat, p. 192; तपः श्रुतं च योनिश्चेत्येतद् ब्राह्मणकारकम्। तपःश्रुताभ्यां यो हीनो जातिब्राह्मण एव सः। युधिष्ठिर मीमांसक के अनुसार इन वचनों का तात्पर्य निन्दा वा स्तुतिमात्र में है, ब्राह्मणत्व–विधान में नहीं है। p. 194.
23. *Manu*, 2.157; यथा काष्ठमयो हस्ती यथा चर्ममयो मृगः। यश्च विप्रोऽनधीयानस्त्रयस्ते नाम बिभ्रति।
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37. Satyavrata Samasrami, 1998, *Aitareyālocanam*, J.P. Publishing House, Delhi, p. 12; शूद्रस्य वेदाधिकारे साक्षात् वेदवचनमपि प्रदर्शितं स्वामिदयानन्देन -- यथेमां वाचं ... ।
38. *Yajurveda*, 26.2; यथेमां वाचं कल्याणीमावदानि जनेभ्यः। ब्रह्मराजन्याभ्यां शूद्राय चार्याय च स्वाय चारणाय।
39. Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya, 2009, *Veda Pravacana*, Satyadharm Prakashan, Rohtak, p. 352.
40. Chandrabhanu Sitaram Sonavane, 1975, *Hindi Gadya Sāhitya*, Granthamala, Rambag, Kanpur, p. 84.
41. *Kesri*, (Marathi paper), dated November 6, 1993.
42. Chamupati, 1935, *Rishi Darshan*, Rajpal and Sons, Lahore, pp. 10-11.
43. Kshemchandra Suman, *Vandanā ke Svara*; Suryakant Tripathi Nirala, *Maharshi Dayanand and Yugāntara*, p. 18.
44. B.R. Ambedkar, Dr., *Jātibhed Nirmūlan*, Prajna Prakashan, Nagpur, p. 109; स्वामी दयानन्द द्वारा प्रतिपादित वर्णव्यवस्था बुद्धिगम्य और निरुपद्रवी है.
45. *Maharashtra Sahitya Patrika* (Marathi Tri-monthly), April-June, 1982.


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# CHAPTER 16

# Swami Dayanand: Women's Emancipator

*Sneh Mahajan*

Women were the worst sufferers of the ills in the Indian society before the advent of Rishi Dayanand. A woman was likened to a 'shoe in the foot' by the common man, and termed as the 'door to hell' by the learned.[1] Even elementary education was denied to women. Evil customs like *purdāh,* child-marriage, *satī,* polygamy etc. were in practice. Many girls were killed right after birth,[2] and many more were widowed even in childhood. Contemporary Hinduism allowed polygamy for the man, the widower, but the widow was not permitted to remarry.

Swami Dayanand's ideas on the crucial problems of women were much ahead of his times, and his contribution towards women's emancipation is invaluable. In fact, he was the leading light of reform in this field. Dayanand vehemently attacked the social evils of female-foeticide, polygamy, oppression of widows and *satī* custom etc. He opposed the marriages of old widowers with young girls, which among other things, resulted in a large number of widows in India. Likewise, Swamiji strongly opposed child-marriage. He favoured inter-caste and international marriages.[3]

Swami Dayanand wrote about 20,000 pages during the last decade of his life. There is, however, no separate treatise authored by him on the condition of women in India. His ideas on this subject lie scattered in his works like Satyarth Prakash, Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Yajurvedabhāshya, Ṛgvedabhāshya, Poona-pravachana, his correspondence, and his numerous other writings. He has touched almost all aspects of women's life in these works which contain a large number of quotations from the Vedas, Manusmriti, Mahābhārata, Brāhmaṇa granthas and other ancient texts. However, he did not draw upon just any and every Sanskrit text which came across his way. His ideas are original and bear the testimony of the Vedas and *ārṣa-granthas,* as he has quoted only from these and rejected the rest like the Purāṇas. Neither did the

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Swami receive western education nor was he influenced by the theories propounded by the Europeans scholars. He was every inch an Indian. He drew total inspiration from the Vedas and suggested remedies for all ills in accordance with their teachings. He gave a new interpretation to the ancient texts and also added his own views at several places. He was the *smṛtikāra* of modern India.

Dayanand accorded the highest respect to women. For him, womanhood and motherhood were inseparable, and every woman was to be treated with respect. He himself looked upon every girl and woman as a personification of the creative power. While at Chittor in 1881, he saw children playing near a temple. Among them was a four-year old girl without any clothes on her body. He bowed and uttered, "mother." Someone remarked that though you condemn idol worship, yet you bowed when you came near a temple. The Swami replied: "Don't you see the girl? She represents motherhood; mothers have given birth to us all."[4]

The relationship between husband and wife was, in Dayanand's eyes, a sacred one. According to him, the attitude should be one of deference, courtesy, honour and respect for each other. It may be noted that "Swamiji advised Maharana Sajjan Singh of Udaipur to exchange mutually *Namaste* with his wife in daily lifee. The practice will enhance mutual love, affection and respect, he said, and will make family life more satisfying and peaceful."[5]

Quoting Manu, he writes in Satyarth Prakash: "Being endowed with learning, the men of the house where the women are honoured are called gods and live in happiness at home. But the religious acts of the family where women are not honoured, become fruitless." He further asserted: "The family soon goes to rack and ruin where women are sad and miserable. That family enjoys perpetual prosperity where women are filled with joy, alacrity and delight."[6]

According to Dayanand, the mother plays the most important role during the first five years of childhood. She is the first amongst the three teachers: mother, father and guru.[7] A mother's lap is the best university in the world. "Children do not receive as good an education from any other person as they do from the mother... Blessed indeed is that mother who teaches good manners to (mould the character of) the children from the very day of conception up to the time when they acquire full learning."[8] Teaching the child to speak properly is one of her main duties.

The women were denied education before the advent of Swami Dayanand. He advocated compulsory education for girls when there was not even a single school run by the Hindus for them in the entire country. He laid down that when the boys and girls are of eight years of age, they should be sent to their respective schools (Gurukuls). In Yajurvedabhāshya,[9] the Swami advised that the government should appoint wise female teachers to teach girls. About the location and other staff, he has said in Satyarth Prakash: "The place of study should be secluded and girls, and boys, schools should be two *kosas* (about four miles) apart. The teachers, servants and menials – all should be females in girls' schools and males in boys' schools."[10]

According to Swami Dayanand, all the children, rich and poor, male and female are to live in identical environment in the Gurukul and should have equal opportunity to get the best education irrespective of the status of their parents. While in the

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Gurukul, all should get the same kind of clothes, food and beddings whether they be princess or of poor families.[11] These rules are for all. In fact he was far more revolutionary than any other progressive thinker. Even in the communist countries, children were allowed to stay with their parents. Thus, they remained conscious of the status, position and influence of their family. Dayanand did not allow this influence and protection even for the girls who were considered to be a dependent lot in his times. He removed all inequalities based on birth and gender. He did not support the old dictum that 'woman and Shudras should not be educated.'[12] For him, education was not the privilege of the selected few. Quoting Manu, he said: "there should be law of the state and also a rule of the society that none could keep his son or daughter at home beyond the age of eight years. They must send them to school. And if they do not, they should be penalised."[13] Education must necessarily be enforced among the men and women of all classes. According to Swami Dayanand, the spread of education is a special function of the state. He said: "All is not well with a government which does not make proper arrangement for people's education."[14] It is very bad for the state if the king is ignorant and foolish, but it is equally bad if the people remain ignorant. It does not befit the ruler to rule over ignorant people. The ruler's duty is to see that the people become educated, righteous and wise."[15]

Regarding the courses of studies for girls, he said:

> Like men... women should also learn grammar, religion and ethics, handicraft, as a matter of course. Without the knowledge of these arts, they cannot distinguish right from wrong, behave themselves agreeably towards the husbands and other relatives, beget children properly, nurture, bring up and well train them, do or see the domestic duties done as they ought to be done, cook or superintend the cooking of food, and prepare drink like medicine according to the method prescribed by the medical art, so that disease may not attack the house-hold, and all the inmates live happily. Without the knowledge of the handicraft, they cannot supervise the building of a house, make or inspect the making of suits, jewellery, and other requisites; without the knowledge of arithmetic, they cannot keep or render accounts of all concerned....[16]

Thus Swami Dayanand not only gave girls the right to education, but linked it with the duties to be performed by them later on. It is in this context, he recorded in Yajurvedabhāshya: "Just as the *rājā* is educated in the *rājanīti* i.e. science of government, similarly his wife *(rānī)* should also be trained in *rājanīti*."[17]

The caste Brahmans did not allow the women and the Shudras to study the Vedas.[18] Dayanand rejected this contention. On the authority of Yajurveda, he asserted that all human beings including women and the Shudras have the right to study the Vedas.[19] He opined that the parents and teachers should initiate children and pupils into the creed of the Gāyatrī mantra. Quoting *Śrautsūtra* इमं मन्त्रं पत्नी पठेत् (*imam mantram patnī paṭhet*), he wrote:

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> It means that the wife should recite this verse of the Vedas at a yajña. If she has not studied the Vedas and other scriptures, how can she read the Vedic verses with fluent pronunciation and proper annotation and converse in Sanskrit on the occasion of worship? Gargi and other ladies, the jewels among the women of ancient India, became eminently learned by the study of the Vedas and other scriptures.[20]

He was of the opinion that "without the knowledge of the Vedas and other sacred scriptures, which give them the right idea of God and religion, they (women) cannot guard themselves against irreligion or vice."[21] After meeting Maharshi Dayanand at Meerut, the learned Panditā Ramabai of Karnataka praised him for giving women the right to learn the Vedas.[22]

Dayanand was in agreement with the ancient seers that, on the completion of her education, a girl belonging to the family of righteous persons may marry if she is at least 16 years of age,[23] has not violated the rules of chastity, has studied at least one Veda, is not within six degrees of descent from boy's mother's family and does not belong to the family of his father, does not suffer from transmissible diseases and so on. Similar conditions apply to the male also.[24] Thus in Dayanand's opinion education is compulsory for both genders of all classes, but all should not have the right to marry. It is a highly revolutionary idea. He goes a step further, on the issue of who should select the life-partner of the girl or the boy and how? According to Swamiji, the matrimonial relation should to be decided on the basis of qualities (*guṇa*), deeds (*karma*) and temperament (*svabhāva*).

Dayanand believed in *Swayamavara* and so he said: "If the parents ever take into their hand to bring about their sons' and daughters' matches, they should not do so without their consent... The chief concern in marriage is of the bride and the bridegroom, and not of their parents; for if they are pleased with each other, they become happy; but if not pleased, they suffer trouble."[25] Such an idea of freedom of choice was almost unimaginable in the nineteenth century India. So Dayanand was far ahead of his times in allowing this right to girls.

Dayanand respected motherhood. So he not only favoured widow-marriage[26] but even advocated *niyoga*. This dealt a death blow to the cruel practice of *satī*. He probably inherited the idea of widow-marriage from his guru Swami Virjanand Dandi, the greatest grammarian of his times, who was the first person to declare that the widow-marriage was not against the teachings of the Vedas.[27] A large number of widows used to live in the temples of Vrindavan at that time. Their plight might have influenced the thinking of this faquir scholar residing in the nearby town of Mathura. Swami Dayanand and his followers converted this idea into a powerful movement. In Swami's life-time, the Gurdaspur and Peshawar Arya Samajs arranged widow-marriages. The Arya magazine of R.C. Berry, which Swami Dayanand regularly received, carried a matrimonial notice inviting widows and men prepared to marry widows to contact the Arya Samaj of Lahore or Sitapur.[28] Later on, monthly magazines *Vidhwā Sahāyak, Pānchāl Panditā and Banitā Hiteṣī* were started from Lahore, Jalandhar and Aligarh respectively.

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Dayanand Saraswati was much concerned about the widows and their children, and advocated a radical change in the laws of the land. He wanted the government to pass a regulation by which children of the widows be entitled to their rightful share in the property of their parents. He desired the regulation to be applicable both to marriage and *niyoga* and even to the so-called illegitimate children. 'Why should the child be punished for the fault of a man and a woman?', asked the Swami. He proposed that this wrong should be redressed and the law be amended accordingly. In this context, he wrote from Meerut to Mulraj of Lahore on July 27, 1880:

> I have a mind to address the government on a subject which is unquestionably a matter of public good, now wished for by hundreds of men who have attended my lectures. It is that the government may be moved to pass a regulation by which children of widows be entitled to claim and obtain their rights of the property, both moveable and immoveable, of their parents and that anyone trying to injure (malign) the widow in anyway be made liable to punishment by government. The results which I anticipate from the above are, that lives of thousands of children will be saved, miscarriages shall be minimised or cease. *Niyoga* or remarriage of widows will thus be introduced at last... I, therefore... ask you to frame a regulation worthy of the subject giving everything requisite in detail... I have given you the hints, you have to think upon and frame what is called a law, complete in all respects having sections, clauses etc. for every part of the points in view. This draft regulation may be sent to me as soon as ready in a complete state for submission to government under my signature, but the sooner it is done, so much the better.[29]

Lala Mulraj, either could not appreciate the value of the proposal of Swamiji or was himself of a different opinion, but lacked the courage to say so to Swamiji and did nothing in this direction. Hence, the proposal could not take a practical shape.

Dayanand was for the full participation of women in all spheres of public life. According to him, a woman should not only look after the children and the family, she should be a teacher, an administrator, a judge and even commander-in-chief of the armed forces. In Yajurvedabhāshya, he wrote: "Wives of the rulers should dispense justice and give good education to all women. Men should not decide cases pertaining to women because women feel shy and scared in presence of men and hence cannot speak or read properly."[30] Discussing another mantra, he says: "The case of the women should be decided by *rānī* (woman) and of the men by *rājā* (man)."[31] According to Swamiji, the man fit to hold the office of a judge, should marry a girl who has qualification of a judge.[32] "The officers of the state should deploy their wives also in performance of these functions of the state which are entrusted to them. The male officers should dispense justice among men and their wives should dispense justice among women."[33]

He opined that the *rānī* (wife of the *rājā*) should lead the armed forces. He wrote in Ṛgvedabhāshya: "In war, the *rānī* should function as commander-in-chief in the absence of the *rājā*. Like him, she should inspire the warriors to fight valiantly."[34] She

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should be respected as a commander. "O men! The valiant warriors should always honour the *rānī* (ruler) who has thorough knowledge of *Dhanurveda* (military science) and is an expert in the use of arms."[35] However, only those women are allowed to perform the duties and functions of the offices of their husbands who have the requisite ability. "That woman belonging to the ruling family (*राजकुल*) is fit to rule who has qualities like patience as the earth."[36] So every lady is not fit to be a queen. Some of the qualities needed are mentioned in Ṛgveda.[37] According to this mantra, she should have acquired knowledge and skills of various types through celibacy. She should be able to harness the forces of nature to advantage.

Many such statements lead us to the conclusion that Swami Dayanand accorded the highest status to woman. He, in no way treated a woman as inferior to man, as was commonly done by the other religious leaders and the priestly class. He was the first modern reformer who not only pleaded but worked for the emancipation of women.

Romain Rolland correctly observed:

> Dayanand was no less generous and no less bold in his crusade to improve the condition of women, a deplorable one in India. He revolted against the abuses from which they suffered, recalling that in the heroic age they occupied in the home and in society a position at least equal to men. They ought to have equal education, according to him, and supreme control in marriage over household matters including the finances. Dayanand in fact claimed equal rights in marriage for men and women, and though he regarded marriage as indissoluble, he admitted the remarriage of widows...[38]

Salutations are in order, to Dayanand, the great soul, the emancipator, the path maker, the *yugadṛṣṭā*, the modern Indian *smṛtikāra*.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Please see (a) Shankarāchārya, *Praśnottrī*, 3.6.8.
   *द्वारं किमेकं नरकस्य–नारी*
   *Dvāram kimekam narkasya – nārī*
   *सम्मोहत्येव सुरेव का–नारी*
   *Sammohatyeva sureva kā –nārī*
   किमत्र हेयम्–कनकं च कान्ता
   *Kimatra heyam – kanakm ca kāntā*
   (b) Goswami Tulsidas in *Rāmacharitmānas* says:
   ढोल गंवार शूद्र पशु नारी। ये सब ताड़न के अधिकारी।।
   *Dhola ganvāra śūdra paśu nārī. Ye saba tarana ke adhikārī*
   अवगुण अष्ट नारि उर रहईं।
   *Avaguṇa asṭa nāri ura rahaiṁ*
   विधि हु न नारि हृदय गति जानी। सकल कपअ अघ अवगुण खानी।।
   *Vidhi hu na nāri hridaya gati jānī. Sakala kapa agha avaguṇa khānī.*
   अधम ते अधम अधम अति नारी।
   *Adhama te adhama adhama ati nārī*
   सहज अपावन नारि।

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*Sahaja apāvana nāri*

(c) Similar quotations are available in other religious books also.

2. Dayanand Saraswati, 1981, *Updesh Manjarī (Pune Pravachan)*, Arsh Sahitya Prachar Trust, New Delhi, pp. 105-107.
3. He quoted Manu (2.240) in support: "Good women, all kinds of gems, knowledge, truth, purity, gentle speech and all arts and industries should be taken from all countries and nations."
   स्त्रियो रत्नान्यथो विद्या सत्यं शौचं सुभाषितम्। विविधानि च शिल्पानि समादेयानि सर्वतः।।
4. Harbilas Sarda, 1968, *Life of Dayanand Saraswati*, Paropkarini Sabha, Ajmer, p. 441.
5. Bhagavaddatta ed., 1955, *Rishi Dayanand ke Patra aur Vijñāpana*, Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Guru Bazar, Amritsar, p. 371.
6. Manu III, 56-57 quoted in Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash* (English translation by Durga Prasad, 1972,), Jan Gyan Prakashan, New Delhi, chapter IV, p.93.
7. He quotes *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* in the second chapter of *Satyarth Prakash*: p.29
   मातृमान् पितृमानाचार्यवान् पुरुषो वेद। *Mātṛmān pitṛmānācāryavān puruṣo veda.*
   Meaning: 'Verily that man alone can become a great scholar who has had the advantage of three good teachers, viz., mother, father and the preceptor.'
8. Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash* (English translation by Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya), 1960, The Kala Press, Allahabad, chapter III, p. 42. Upadhyayaji records in the footnote: "Swami Dayanand believes that the character of mother influences the character of the child in the womb. Therefore, the upbringing of the child begins not at its birth but at the conception."
9. Dayanand Saraswati, 1945, *Yajurvedabhāshya*, X, 6 (ed. Pandit Brahm Dutt Jigyasu), Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Lahore.
10. Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash*, p. 40.
11. *Ibid.*
12. स्त्रीशूद्रौ नाधीयातामिति श्रुतेः। *Strīśūdrau nādhīyātāmiti śruteḥ.*
13. Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash*, p. 40; Manu VII, 152.
14. *Ibid.*, chapter VI.
15. *Dayanand Saraswati ke patra aur Vijñāpana*, Part-I, edited by Pt. Bhagavaddatta, 1945, Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Lahore, p. 25.
16. Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter III, p.74.
17. Dayanand Saraswati, *Yajurvedabhāshya (XIII, 16)*.
18. *Brahmasūtra Shankara Bhāshya*, 1.3.38
    अथास्य वेदमुपशृण्वतस्त्रपुजतमुभ्यां श्रोत्रप्रतिपूरणम् इति।
    भवति च वेदोच्चारणे जिह्वाच्छेदो धारणे शरीरभेद इति।
19. Dayanand Saraswati, *Yajurvedabhāshya*, (XXVI, 2).
    यथेमां वाचं कल्याणीमावदानि जनेभ्यः।
    ब्रह्मराजन्याभ्यां शूद्राय चार्याय च स्वाय चारणाय।
20. Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash*, (English translation by Durga Prasad), p. 73.
21. *Ibid.*, p.74.
22. Devendranath Mukhopadhyaya, 2050 Vikrami, *Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati kā Jivan Charitra*, Govindram Hasanand, Delhi, pp. 532-533.
23. Dayanand quotes the great Dhanvantari, author of *Sushruta*, who forbids marriage of a man before twenty-five and a girl before sixteen years of age. He says: "If a girl under sixteen conceives of a man under twenty five years, she very often miscarries, and if a child is born it does not live long, but if it does live long, it is nothing but a weakling. A man should not therefore have sexual intercourse with a girl of a very tender age." (*Sushruta Sharīrasthāne*, 10.47,48)
24. *Manu* (III,3,4,8,9).

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25. Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter IV, pp. 81-82.
26. Manu (III, 4,8,9); Ram Prakash, Dr., 2006, *Satyarth Prakash Vimarsh*, Satyarth Prakashan, Kurukshetra, pp.106-112.
27. Ram Prakash, Dr., 2012, *Guru Virjanand Dandi: Life and Philosophy of a Grammarian par excellence*, Satyarth Prakashan, Kurukshetra, p. 103.
28. *The Arya*, 1882-83, Lahore, vol. I, p. 86; cf. J.T.F. Jordens, 1979, *Dayanand Saraswati*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, p. 197.
29. Bhagavaddatta, *Rishi Dayanand Saraswati ke Patra aur Vijñāpana*, part I, pp. 373-75.
30. Dayanand Saraswati, *Yajurvedabhāshya, X,26.*
31. Dayanand Saraswati, 1980, *Yajurvedabhāshya*, XIII, 16; cf. Shanta Malhotra, 1980, *Political Thought of Swami Dayanand*, Arya Swadhyaya Kendra, New Delhi, chapters X, XI
32. Bhagavaddatta, *Rishi Dayanand Saraswati ke Patra aur Vijñāpana*, part I, pp. 373-75.
33. Dayanand Saraswati, *Yajurvedabhāshya*, XIII, 17.
34. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedabhāshya*, VI, 13, 15, 75.
35. Dayanand Saraswati, *Yajurvedabhāshya*, XIII, 16; cf. Shanta Malhotra, *op. cit.*, chapters X, XI
36. *Ibid.*, XIII, 18.
37. *Ṛgveda*, III, 38.3
38. Romain Rolland, 1954, *The Life of Ramakrishna*, Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Almora, Himalayas, pp. 156-157.

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# CHAPTER 17

# Maharshi Dayanand's Contribution to Hindi Language and Literature

*Manjulata Vidyarthi*

Rishi Dayanand played a crucial role in the making of a New India. That he was a great reformer, a progressive thinker, a nationalist, and an erudite scholar of the Vedas and other religious scriptures, is a matter of common knowledge. But, that he was also a great litterateur and that his works mark a unique place in the development of Hindi language and literature, is a fact which has not attracted due attention.

Swami Dayanand made tireless efforts in propagating the concept of one language, one religion and one country. His efforts for promoting the cause of Hindi as a national language were an integral part of his work towards national integration. He accorded prestige to Hindi as a language capable of expressing the knowledge of the highest order and promoted it tirelessly through his work in the field of culture, social reforms and national awakening. He was instrumental in inspiring his contemporary creative litterateurs, and this inspiration finds its apparent reflection in different literary genres. Besides enabling Hindi to eventually become the national language and making it rich and forceful through his writings, he also considerably improved and embellished its literary form. Vishnu Prabhakar regards his place "among the creators of Hindi prose as, forever secure."[1]

## I
## THE PLIGHT OF HINDI AND DAYANAND'S VISION

Rishi Dayanand aroused a deep sentiment of self-pride and a high sense of self-esteem among the countrymen by dispelling their sense of despondency, inferiority complex and slavish tendencies. He gave a clarion call for change and awakening through his

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work, speeches and writings. He undertook nation-wide sojourns, in the course of which he lectured and held debates to establish his views and beliefs and thus criticise and condemn the hypocritical, false and vain ostentations, in an attempt to demolish ill-knowledge and to dispel the darkness created thereby. In the beginning of this mission, he used to speak only in Sanskrit, though in its easiest form. This however, had limited his area of work and influence only to scholars and Pandits.

Rishi Dayanand visited Calcutta towards the end of 1872. In those days, the city was home to many scholars, ascetics and lofty persons of the stature of Devendranath Thakur, Ramkrishna Paramhans, Dwijendranath Thakur, Keshub Chandra Sen, Rajnarayan Vasu, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Pt. Mahesh Chandra Nyayratna and Pt. Taracharan Tarkaratna. Rishi Dayanand held meetings and discussions with many of them. The knowledgeable section of the public was enamoured of Rishi Dayanand's exposition of the religious scriptures. Babu Keshub Chandra Sen made a suggestion to Rishi Dayanand, "If you go to the people and speak to them in the language of their day-to-day use and put across to them your views, you will surely do a lot of good to the country. Since the interpreters present your views only in their lop-sided form while translating them, you should talk directly to the people without any interpreter in between." Rishi Dayanand at once accepted this suggestion. Vishnu Prabhakar writes in this connection, "That moment undoubtedly occupies a place written in golden letters in the history of Hindi language, when on the suggestion of a Bengali speaking person a Gujarati speaking person agreed to speak and write in the day-to-day language of the people."[2]

***The Condition of Hindi during Rishi Dayanand's Time***

The conditions were quite uncongenial for Hindi at the time Rishi Dayanand adopted the language for his use. English and Urdu dominated the scene in day-to-day dealings and administrative correspondence. Some leaders were vitiating the linguistic atmosphere by issuing anti-Hindi statements. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and other leaders of his ilk had called Hindi the language of the rustic. These people had influenced the English as also French scholars like Garcin de Tassy, a teacher of Urdu and English in Paris. While speaking on the issue 'Urdu or Hindi', Sir Syed Ahmad Khan said, "Hindi smacks of Hinduism... on the other hand, Urdu has the mixed flavour of Islamic culture and Islamic way of life and conduct. The Islamic culture carries in it some characteristics of Christianity, or is Messianic in nature."[3] Those who loved Brajbhāshā would regard the *Khaḍī Bolī* (Hindi) as "one of those who sell medicated powders, or as a cheap language spoken in the cheap markets."[4] They didn't regard the *Khaḍī Bolī* fit for poetic expressions. Interestingly, the dramas of Bharatendu Harishchandra and others carry the poetic part in Brajbhāshā against the prose part in *Khaḍī Bolī*. Those championing the cause of Urdu would make fun of this mixture. Students in those days preferred Urdu as a language of study to Hindi. The British government of India issued a statement expressing these ideas about Hindi: It is not proper in our view to hold such a language as compulsory for studies as is not the language of the government and its offices. Besides, the Muslim students who are the students of Delhi College in a very large number will not have a positive attitude towards it.[5] Mr. Havel, who was in those

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days the chairman of the department of education of the United Provinces, a Hindi speaking state, went to the extent of saying, "It would have been better if the Hindu children had been taught Urdu instead of giving them practice of expressing their ideas in a language which ultimately has to bow to Urdu in submission."[6]

***Christening Hindi as Aryabhāshā***

At a time when Hindi was being dubbed as a 'clumsy' and an 'uncouth dialect', Swami Dayanand Saraswati christened it with the lofty name of Aryabhāshā (a conversational language of civilised, genteel and progressive people). Maharshi Dayanand has used the word Aryabhāshā for Hindi everywhere in his works. He would call India Aryavartta and the Hindus, Aryas. The word 'Arya' has been used everywhere in the ancient Indian literature. The word 'Hindi' and 'Hindu' are conspicuously and completely absent there. Dr. Bhawani Lal Bhartiya writes, "The word *Arya* is a universally accepted name in as much as it carries a sober and lofty implication. For the same reason calling the language of people living in Aryavartta as *Aryabhāshā* is only in perfect order."[7]

Rishi Dayanand wanted to enthrone Hindi (Aryabhāshā) as the national language of the whole of Aryavartta. He not only enhanced the value of the Hindi language by christening it Aryabhāshā, but also linked it with the Nation's cultural and literary flow starting from the antiquity of India. Dhirendra Varma regards this name "as more natural and logical, being closer to the culture of the central India."[8]

Acharya Satyarvrat Sharma 'Ajeya' points out the unifying element in the rechristening of Hindi, "Swamiji refers to the holy language of Aryavartta – the subcontinent Bharat – as *Aryabhāshā*. If we all accept this name given by the Swami, all the disputes for different names such as Hindi, Urdu, Rekhta, Hindustānī, *Khaḍī Bolī* or Nāgarī, etc. will come to an end."[10]

Swami Dayanand embellished and cleansed the Hindi language for giving it a level and form of national acceptability. He had said, "I am anxious to see that day when all people in India from Kashmir to Kanyakumari will be able to speak and understand one language."[10] Devendranath Mukhopadhyaya has also written,

> Rishi Dayanand made great efforts of the same level for introducing one language in the whole of Aryavratta (India) from one end to the other, as he had done for uniting the Aryan race by demolishing the sectarianism that had crept into the Indian society on account of the divisions due to race and lineage, caste and creed, and sects and sub-sects.[11]

***Elevating Hindi to the Status of National Language***

National interests were uppermost in the mind of Rishi Dayanand. He used for Hindi, expressions like 'national language' and 'mother tongue' at a time when one could not even dream of Hindi becoming the national language. He pioneered the concept of nationalism in the 19th century by underlining the need for one dress, one language, one culture, etc. He realised that it was only Hindi which could incorporate in it the national culture. The Brahmo Samaj and the Prārthanā Samaj continued comprising mainly the people who had received English education, and so could not bring into

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their fold the common people. By adopting Hindi, Rishi Dayanand not only made his mission popular but also laid a strong foundation for the freedom of the country by promoting Hindi which was to acquire the status of the national and official language of the country in future. In his view, "it was only Hindi which could deliver his message to all, be they living in palaces or hutments."[12] One easily realises this fact on taking into consideration Rishi Dayanand's style of lecturing. He was an orator par excellence, even in Hindi, a language that he had learnt only at a late age. According to Madame Blavatsky, "There has been no other person in India after Shankarāchārya who is as impressively articulate a speaker as Dayanand was."[13]

After having acquired adequate practice in spoken Hindi, he would deliver speeches in a sober voice with an impressive pronunciation and accent which rendered the audience spell-bound. Gopal Rao Hari Deshmukh writes,

> The Swami came to Poona in the month of June in 1875 on the invitation of the respected, esteemed and scholarly householders. We were lucky enough to have listened to some 15-16 lectures delivered by him in the Hindu Club during those days. How crowded the audience hall was, and how exceptionally good the speaker's preaching and lectures were, it all beggars description.[14]

***Arya Samaj's Contribution in the Promotion of Hindi***

Swamiji and Arya Samaj made a remarkable contribution in getting Hindi enthroned as the national language. Swamiji made it compulsory for members of the Arya Samaj to learn Hindi. The Arya Samaj establishments at his instance brought out pamphlets and magazines in Hindi, and also set up schools for the teaching of Hindi, in India and abroad. L. Bhagwandeen and Ramdas Gaur opine:

> He made the development and spread of Hindi language a special mission of Arya Samaj of which he was the founder. Our assessment is that many well organised institutions have not been able to do as much of good to Hindi even jointly as the Swami did single-handedly.[15]

Acharya Ramchandra Shukla wrote,

> Finding the newly educated people getting attracted towards the Prophetic Monotheism, Swami Dayanand appeared on the scene standing up for Vedic Monotheism, and in Samvat 1920 he started lecturing to educate people by visiting different towns and cities repeatedly. It needs no mention that these speeches were made in the prevailing simple Hindi language spoken in a widely spread area. Not only did Swamiji publish his Satyarth Prakash in Hindi (Aryabhāshā) but also published his Commentary on the Vedas in both Hindi and Sanskrit. The followers of Swamiji used to call Hindi *Aryabhāshā*. Swamiji... made the study of Hindi or Aryabhāshā compulsory for all the followers of the Arya Samaj. Resultantly, in the western districts of the United Provinces and in

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Punjab a rapid spread and promotion of Hindi prose took place. It is only due to Swamiji that Hindi is dominating the linguistic scene in Punjab these days.[16]

Speaking on the subject 'Hindi, Urdu or Hindustani', Acharya Padam Singh said,

> Swami Dayanand, the founder of the Arya Samaj, is the foremost of those who advocate and practise the use of the word *Aryabhāshā* for Hindi. The radical Arya Samajists of fundamental views appear to be ever-ready for propagating this word even today. The conventions and conferences relating to language held during the functions of Gurukuls are not named as Nagari or Hindi Meets and Conventions; instead, they are named as Aryabhāshā Conferences.[17]

***Dayanand's Efforts to Install Hindi as the National Language***

Rishi Dayanand was instrumental in getting a number of memoranda from different places sent to Hunter Commission which was set up in 1882 to decide what should be the language of administration and medium of instruction.[18] He gave Hindi a national form having realised its capacity to work as a link language. He had also done a yeoman's job by projecting Hindi, the Aryabhāshā, as capable of being used in administrative work. He influenced the rulers in the Rajputana region, and got Hindi a place of prestige in these royal families. He taught the Princes of this region the *Manusmriti* through Hindi medium, and while preaching also impressed upon them that they should first learn to read and write the Devanagari script. It was at his instance that the ruler of Udaipur started the use of simple Hindi in place of Persian as the language of the state. Also the ruler of Jodhpur, inspired by Rishi Dayanand, announced Hindi to be the language of the state and administration. This was the first state in India to do so. The dream of making Hindi the state language in India turned into a reality in 1950. Delivering a speech in the parliament, K.M. Munshi who was a staunch supporter of Hindi being installed as a state language, said, "About fifty years ago, under the influence of the advice of Swami Dayanand, I realised that it was very essential that Hindi should become the state language for the unity of the country."

## II
## DAYANAND: A FOUNDING-FIGURE OF MODERN HINDI AND ITS PROSE

***Rishi Dayanand's Contribution to the Evolution of Hindi and its Prose***

The form and shape of Hindi prose had not been finally determined at the time Rishi Dayanand appeared on the stage. Urdu was in vogue in the government offices, in those days. While some people like Raja Shiv Prasad wanted Hindi to be Urdu-cum-Persian oriented, others like Raja Lakshman Singh wanted Hindi prose to be replete with Sanskrit or Sanskrit based words.

At a time when Hindi prose was struggling to take a definite shape of its own, two great men, *viz.*, Bharatendu Harishchandra and Dayanand appeared on the stage, the service of both of whom to Hindi is unforgettable. Bharatendu has been regarded as the epoch-making father of Hindi literature, and the creator of Hindi prose. The

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contribution of Rishi Dayanand is no less than that of Bharatendu Harishchandra, though it has received far less recognition. In fact his contribution is more unique than that of Bharatendu in many ways. Bharatendu's mother tongue was Hindi and he belonged to the world of literature. On the other hand, Dayanand's mother tongue was Gujarati, and basically he belonged to the field of religion, culture and social ethos. His aim was to propagate Vedic beliefs and the Vedic way of life. It was as a by-product of this pursuit that he joined the arena of literary excellence by giving Hindi a new form.

Rishi Dayanand can indeed be called the founder and father of Hindi prose. Hindi acquired popularity, prestige and impetus with the publication of Rishi Dayanand's Satyarth Prakash. His commentary on the Vedas in Hindi and Satyarth Prakash can really be called epochal events in the field of Hindi literature. His literature infused elegance in Hindi prose. The capacity to write and to carry out debate and discussion logically developed; the style of jovial, entertaining and satirical language got introduced in Hindi writings; there appeared a remarkable improvement in the language due to lively, sharp and elegant expressions used. Serious reflection on Vedic beliefs and a minute examination of philosophical issues began to be carried out in Hindi, whose literature had remained confined to fiction so far. All this happened for the first time in Hindi prose. In the words of Sadgurusharan Awasthi, "Swamiji was the first person who elevated the position of Hindi prose to a high level. He was the first one to have written on social, philosophical and political subjects. Swamiji was like a whirlwind for the social life in the country. His social movement elevated Hindi, and the literature based on thoughtfulness was generated."[19]

Rishi Dayanand's works added a lot of richness to both the language and the literature of Hindi. His literature in *Khaḍī Bolī* is of a unique type and has a special place in the Hindi literary prose of nineteenth century, and his books display the development of an easy, interesting and attractive style of Hindi prose. Not only this, none before Rishi Dayanand had written such sweet *ākhyāns* (stories) in *Khaḍī Bolī*.

Undoubtedly Bharatendu Harishchandra developed, polished and perfected Hindi prose, but his area was confined to literature comprising only story and drama writing. Rishi Dayanand, on the other hand, used a cultivated form of Hindi and adopted a refined and effective style in stating properly the philosophical, social, political and other sober subjects. This was really a new feature in Hindi literature.

Rishi Dayanand and Bharatendu were contemporaries, and both promoted and embellished the Hindi language and literature. Although Bharatendu wrote 175 books and Rishi Dayanand authored only 66, yet the latter's creations are far more voluminous. Satyavrat Sahityaratna opines, "If we put only the incomplete *Commentary on the Vedas* written by Dayanand in one pan of the scales, the literature created by Bharatendu in the other pan will appear as insignificant as not equal even to the make-weight. And if viewed from the angle of the subject matter, the literature of Bharatendu can be accommodated in just a blank nook of the Satyarth Prakash."[20] Here, the purpose of comparing the literatures of the two is not to undervalue Bharatendu's contribution but to highlight the voluminous contribution of Dayanand's works, which has been sadly undervalued.

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Prof. Hari Datta Vedalankar writes, "Swami Dayanand enjoys a unique position as far as the service to Hindi is concerned. His place is not lower than that of Bharatendu Harishchandra as far as putting Hindi in a new mould is concerned."[21] According to Lakshmi Sagar Varshneya, "Bharatendu and Swami Dayanand are the most elegant gifts to Hindi of that period of struggle."[22]

## DAYANAND'S LITERATURE: SOME EPOCHAL WORKS & THEIR CONTRIBUTION

The literature created by Rishi Dayanand is voluminous and of great importance. He made a historic contribution in making Hindi a capable and a rich language by producing literature of the highest order. It was Dayanand who made the first successful attempt of expressing sophisticated philosophical thoughts through the *Khaḍī Bolī* form of Hindi. Rishi Dayanand was the first person who made available the Vedas in Hindi for the convenience of Hindi-speaking people and the first to have created literature carrying condemnation or confirmation of religious ideas. It was he who gave the largest number of talks in Hindi during his times, and made Hindi the language of the masses by propagating it in non-Hindi speaking states. But his large-bodied literature is not religious and philosophical only. Most of his books concern subjects of practical and worldly relevance.

Rishi Dayanand was 48 years old when he accepted the proposal of Keshub Chandra Sen to adopt Hindi. Nearly 15 months hence, in the 50th year of his life, he delivered his first lecture in Hindi in May 1874. Henceforth, he wrote all his books and undertook all *shāstrārthas* in Hindi. It became the language of his correspondence, and all his advertisements started being published in Hindi. Though he had learnt Hindi at an advanced age, in the brief period of ten years (from 1873 to 1883), his work surpassed that of even the greatest Hindi speaking protagonists. Although some of his books had been published even earlier, he produced a large body of literature in Hindi, which speaks volumes of his brilliant intellect and exceptional industriousness. Yudhisthira Mimamsaka writes about the literature he produced during these ten years,

> The complete literature written by him covers twenty thousand pages. Besides this, he used to meet visitors, exchange views with them, reply to hundreds of letters he used to receive from other places, deliver lectures and carry out debates and discussions with those who opposed his principles and ideology – all this constituted the work separate from the books he wrote as mentioned above.[23]

Behind creating such a great, excellent and voluminous literature were his wide and deep study, thoughtfulness and hard work. How deep and exhaustive his study of Sanskrit books was becomes fully clear from his statement that, "I regard about three thousand books as authentic and of evidential value right from the *Ṛgveda* down to *Pūrva Mīmānsā* as per my understanding and investigation."[24]

Rishi Dayanand's deep study, thinking and hard work bore fruit in the form of a large and high level of literature. Some of his main works are 1. *Satyarth Prakash*, 2.

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*Pañcamahāyajñavidhi*, 3. *Āryābhivinaya*, 4. *Sanskārvidhi*, 5. *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā*, 6. *Ṛgveda Bhāshya*, 7. *Yajurveda Bhāshya*, 8. *Āryoddeshyaratnamālā*, 9. *Bhrāntinivāraṇa*, 10. *Aṣṭādhyāyī Bhāshya*, 11. *Ātmacaritra*, 12. *Vyavahārbhānu*, 13. *Gokarunānidhi* and 14. *Vedāṅgaprakāsh Granthmālā*.

Besides these, the collections of his *shāstrārthas*, preaching, and correspondence are also available. Gulab Rai is of the opinion, "The real literature is only that which brings about human welfare."[25] Evaluated on this yardstick, Rishi Dayanand's write-ups deserve to be categorised as a priceless treasure. His literature put the whole society in a new mould extracting it from a deep ditch of downfall and putting it on the ladder of progress, thus marking the beginning of a new era.

***Satyarth Prakash and its Contribution to Hindi***

Satyarth Prakash is the most famous and the most important of the books of Rishi Dayanand, which carries the sum and substance of all his beliefs and principles on a wide range of subjects. In the words of Acharya Chatursen, "This book shows the writer's deep study, empathy, exceptional intellect, astonishing logical marvels, adaptability, keen insight, capability to quickly rejoin and retort, and intense indignation towards social evils and orthodoxy."[26]

Hindi prose was confined only to a handful of books of stories, fables and treatises of devotional nature before Rishi Dayanand. No philosophical discussion ever appeared in them and talk of social reform was completely absent from Hindi books. The critical examination of scientific and spiritual subjects was negligible in them. Political issues were not regarded as subjects fit for Hindi literature. The credit for all this goes to Swami Dayanand in as much as he was the first to have carried out a critical examination of serious issues relating to philosophical, spiritual, ethical, social and political fields. The beginning of all this started with Satyarth Prakash. Dr. Satya Prakash has said, "This book gave birth to the style of philosophical books in Hindi as a result of which slowly and gradually writers started writing commentaries on the Upaniṣads and also started translating the philosophical treatises."[27] Satyavrat Sahityaratna writes,

> This book is the generator of the origin of the present religious, social and political movements. The movements for the advancement of the untouchables, for women's education, for self-rule, for protesting against tax on salt, for the use of only indigenous goods, for the propagation of *Khaḍī*, for ancient system of education, for democracy, for Hindi as the national language, etc., all had their germination in the speeches of the Maharshi and *Satyarth Prakash*.[28]

Lakshmi Narayan Dube considers Satyarth Prakash to be the launch-pad of literature in Hindi prose.[29] Dr. Lakshmi Narayan Gupta calls "this book epoch-making in the field of prose in Hindi literature, which on the one hand, gave it life, energy and elegance, and on the other hand, broke the century old traditional shackles of writing only in verse, and thus made easily accessible the reading and teaching of science, history, politics, sociology, religion and other such subjects not only to the scholars but also to the educated common people."[30] According to Vijendranarayan Singh, "No book

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supporting rational thoughts and beliefs, other than Satyarth Prakash was written in Hindi during the nineteenth century in India."[31] Pt. Buddhdev Vidyalankar (Swami Samarpananand Saraswati) writes, "From birth till death, from the composition of the family up to the constitution of the governing body for the empire encompassing the whole world, there is no topic which has been left untouched. So if all his contribution is to be stated in one word, it is Satyarth Prakash."[32]

Many revolutionaries like Ram Prasad Bismil and other freedom fighters were motivated for joining the freedom struggle by this book. A man of Dadabhai Naoroji's stature said to Lokmanya Tilak, "Swami Dayanand's book (Satyarth Prakash) inspires me a lot during the freedom struggle." Similarly Vinayak Damodar Savarkar said, "Such simple language in which Rishi Dayanand wrote Satyarth Prakash should become the national language of India."[33] Dayanand as a maker of Hindi prose can be evaluated only in the context of his times, and there, as Vishnu Prabhakar has pointed out, he is "matchless."[34]

***Veda Bhāshya and its Contribution to Hindi***

Translation of the Vedas into Hindi is an epochal work of Dayanand. No scholar of the Vedas until that day had ever brought the eternal Vedic wisdom into the tongue of the lay people. Having done so, Rishi Dayanand threw open the doors of Vedic knowledge to the whole mankind. He started a new era in the literary world by putting across to common people in their own language that the Vedas are the source of all true learning and lore. At a time when Macaulay had declared that English literature stacked on just one shelf was more valuable than the entire Indian literature, Swami Dayanand demolished the vanity of the colonial rulers by declaring that the four Vedas in their original form were the source of all learning and science."[35] Lala Lajpat Rai calls the translation of the Vedas into Hindi, the most important and the most courageous work of Dayanand's life.[36] The historians of Hindi literature have failed to recognise the true importance of the commentary on the Vedas in Hindi, even though this commentary in Aryabhāshā is a perpetual gift of Rishi Dayanand to Hindi literature.

Dr. Lakshmi Narayan Gupta has written, "The commentary on the Vedas is an epoch-making event in the field of Hindi literature... If Rishi Dayanand had written only the commentary on the Vedas, and had not done any other service in the field of literature, even then the world of Hindi would have been indebted to him."[37]

His literature moulded the whole society into a new form. It extracted the society from the deep abyss of downfall and put it on the ladder of progress. Vishnu Prabhakar has acknowledged, "One may differ from Rishi Dayanand in views, but this is also a fact that his books have influenced many a great man."

## A STUDY OF VARIOUS GENRES IN DAYANAND'S LITERATURE

***The Genre of Short-Story***

Rishi Dayanand has used the genre of story-telling in a number of his compositions. None before Dayanand had written interesting stories in *Khaḍī Bolī* the way he has. His *Vyavahārbhānu* is the most important of such books. He has tried to illustrate his beliefs

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through stories also in Satyarth Prakash. He used to tell stories for illustration, even while giving instructive talks. These lectures contained an element of humour, marked by a didactic approach with a tinge of irony and satire. The germination of the short story in Hindi literature can be seen in his illustrative tales and episodes. It is for this reason that Vishnu Prabhakar acknowledges Rishi Dayanand as "the germinal source of the genre of modern short story."[38] Bharatendu Harishchandra's famous play entitled *Andher Nagrī* is not his original work viewed from the angle of the play's plot. Its story had been written by Dayanand in his own language in *Vyavahārbhānu* as *Gavargaṇḍa Rājā* two years before Bharatendu's play appeared.[39]

***The Genre of Autobiography***

Dayanand's is the first autobiography ever published in Hindi literature. It is characterised by graphic and narrative descriptions. The language of this work is worth noticing in as much as it is easy and elegant. On the basis of its subject and its craft, it can be called a standard autobiography in as much as it carries an accurate account, has the form of self-description, carries self-analysis, propounds truthfulness of facts and is an account based on efficient memory. Dr. Vishvabandhu Shastri has described Rishi's autobiography as the first standard work.[40]

***The Genre of Epistle-writing***

Rishi Dayanand's letters mark the formal beginning of epistolary literature in Hindi. His epistolary literature is voluminous as he wrote and dictated numerous letters addressed to a number of people. His letters are reflective of his personality, ideology and innermost feelings. L.N. Dubey writes, "Maharshi Dayanand's letters carry a great importance as they not only mirror clearly the age in which he worked and lived but also foreshadow vividly the form and importance Hindi prose writing was to acquire."[41] Kamal Punjani writes, "up to 1935, Swami Dayanand's gems of letters alone were scattering elegance all around in the field of epistolary literature in Hindi."[42]

## DAYANAND'S HINDI: CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTRIBUTION

***The Language and Style of Rishi Dayanand's Literature***

Rishi Dayanand's Hindi is cultured, clear and effective. His language is full of elegance, simplicity, clarity, fluency, artistic excellence and telling sarcasm. The language of his Satyarth Prakash is grammatically correct, ornamented, Sanskritised and idiomatic. The vocabulary of Hindi language has been remarkably enriched as Dayanand's literature was Sanskrit-oriented. The cleansed form of Hindi that we have today, owes a lot to Rishi Dayanand who embellished the language considerably.

From the point of view of style too, Dayanand's Hindi prose is an interesting subject of study. He developed a simple, comprehensible, and interesting style of Hindi. The loftiness of his ideas makes his language very impressive, with an infusion of wit, humour and even sarcasm. He makes his beliefs clear systematically through logic, evidence and illustrations, which was never done by anyone in Hindi before him. He started the tradition of carrying out examination and exposition of issues in Hindi on

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the pattern of ancient scriptures. His style of analysing issues and establishing views thereon is like that of a philosopher. His prose displays a mix of logical reasoning and fearlessness. Dr. Shivgopal Mishra writes, "The Hindi prose has acquired from Rishi Dayanand and his Arya Samaj a logical style of carrying out condemnation and approval of points at issue, which is elegant, clear, and has the power to impress the contesting party."[43]

Rishi Dayanand through his literature has developed a serious and sober style of prose to deal with subjects like religious instruction, debate, God, Soul, Matter, Vedas, etc. His style has been imitated by almost all subsequent litterateurs. This resulted into Hindi prose becoming richer and stronger progressively, bringing about a revolutionary change. According to Vishnu Prabhakar, "Rishi Dayanand made Hindi prose sober, simple, elegant, powerful and effective while also making it interesting and flexible. This is his greatest gift to Hindi prose."[44] While talking of Rishi Dayanand's work in the field of Hindi, Prof. Shriprakash writes, "Maharshi's Hindi was of a special kind, and he had his own style of writing. It is difficult to assess how many new words he gave to Hindi, and how many old words he used in the new context. His Hindi was elegant and properly cultivated. If one were to write the history of the purification of Hindi, Maharshi's contribution will certainly be talked of."[45]

***The Influence of Sanskrit on Dayanand's Hindi***

Rishi Dayanand was an erudite scholar of Sanskrit. His speeches and writings were only in Sanskrit up to the 49th year of his life, before he learnt Hindi. So it was natural for his Hindi to have been deeply influenced by it.[46] He has used वा (*vā*) everywhere in his books which is a Sanskrit word of which the parallel synonym accepted in *Khaḍī Bolī* is या (*yā*) or अथवा (*athavā*). A sentence in *Khaḍī Bolī* does not begin with और (*aur*) or क्योंकि (*kyonki*), but in Rishi Dayanand's books, particularly in Satyarth Prakash there are many places where these words have been so used, for example in:

i) और मृतक पर्यन्त का भी दान यजमानों से लेने लगे। (And they started receiving donation from those who would host *yajñas* even in case the *yajña* was held for the dead.)

ii) क्योंकि जो विद्वान होता है, वह सत्यासत्य की परीक्षा करके सत्य का ग्रहण और असत्य को छोड़ देता है। (Because a scholar can tell the truth from the untruth and gives up the untruth).

This use of और (*aur*) and क्योंकि (*kyonki*) in the beginning of a sentence is on account of the influence of Sanskrit. The use of आदि (*ādi*) is made in several ways in Sanskrit, but in Hindi the word आदि (*ādi*) or इत्यादि (*ityādi*) is used after many nouns in a sentence without the use of और (*aur*) before the last noun. However, Rishi Dayanand has used the word आदि (*ādi*) on the pattern of Sanskrit, for example in:

i) कस्तूरी, सुगंधित पुष्प और अतर आदि (musk, fragrant flower and perfume, etc.)

ii) जीव और पृथ्वी आदि (the soul and the earth, etc.)

iii) इच्छादि रूपादि गुण। (desire, etc. beauty, etc. qualities)

The influence of Sanskrit on the language of the Swami can be seen in determining the gender of a Hindi word. He has everywhere used in masculine gender some words

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which in Hindi have been accepted as belonging to feminine gender.[47] Some verbs in his books have also been used following the practice or pattern of Sanskrit.[48]

***Enrichment of Hindi Vocabulary flowing from Dayanand's Literature***

Flowing from Sanskrit oriented literature of Rishi Dayanand, a remarkable increase has taken place in Hindi vocabulary. It cannot be even imagined that Rishi Dayanand ever faced any difficulty in finding suitable words to express his ideas as he had a vast vocabulary at his command.

In the first chapter of Satyarth Prakash, he has given one hundred names of God (*Īśvara*) with grammatical structure while explaining their meaningfulness. He regards *Om* as the supreme name of God. The remaining names have been explained in this chapter as indicative of, and being in consonance with His qualities (*guṇa*), actions (*karmas*) and nature *(svabhāva)*. Accordingly, being self-resplendent He has been called *Agni* (fire); being knowledge-incarnate He is *Manu*; being the one who looks after everyone He is *Prajāpati*; being extremely grand and glorious He is *Indra*; being the basis of every life He is *Prāṇa*, and being all-powerful among the powerful - Almighty His name is *Parameśvara*. Similarly being the one who has created the Cosmos His name is *Brahmā*, being omnipresent He is *Viṣṇu*, being the one who punishes the wicked and makes them suffer He is *Rudra*, being benevolent to all he is *Śiva*, being the cause of the dissolution of the world and regulator of time His name is *Kālāgni*.[49] Thus by giving an intelligent explanation of all the names of God, Rishi Dayanand proved that no name of His is meaningless. Similarly in the prayers in the *Āryābhivinaya* God has been addressed by nearly ninety different names.[50] Each address carries a qualitative adjective of God. The *saguṇa* bhakti poets (who believed in the incarnation of God) had limited the existence of God to just Rama and Krishna. Rishi Dayanand has addressed God by so many names on the basis of His qualities as has not ever been done by any devotee, poet or litterateur. Sanskrit-based words have been used resulting into the enrichment of Hindi vocabulary. He has given to Hindi many old words such as *gurukula, āśrama, snātaka, kulpati, Ārya, Āryāvartta, Āryabhāṣā, namaste*, etc.

Despite the preponderance of Sanskrit words, there are both *tatsam* and *tadbhav* words in his rich vocabulary. He always made efforts to keep his language simple and easily understandable. "He did not allow Hindi to be difficult or burdensome by not making it the language of only the learned. Neither was *gavāha* (the witness) banished nor was the *collector* pushed out of Hindi. He also used *tatsam* and *tadbhav* words in a balanced manner. He used *sarv* as well as *sabkā*.[51]

***The Adoption of Tatsam Words for Pan-India Acceptability***

The form of Hindi had not been fully and finally determined till the time of Rishi Dayanand. While some of the early Hindi writers like Raja Shiv Prasad used a lot of Urdu words, others like Bharatendu Harishchandra and Pratap Narayan Mishra were in favour of using *tadbhav* words Though derived from Sanskrit, *Tadbhav* words acquire varying forms depending on the area in which used, and also run the risk of inconsistent form in writing.

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At such a time Rishi Dayanand adopted the policy of choosing *tatsam* words (Sanskrit words in their original form) having recognised the importance of the fact that Sanskrit is the original source of Indian languages and that it would ensure consistency in their written form in all areas. The subsequent litterateurs have adopted the *tatsam*–oriented style in place of *tadbhav*–oriented style. The Sanskrit words like *rājya, vāra, varṣa* have taken the place of *tadbhav* words like *rāja, bāra, barasa* respectively adopted by Bharatendu Harishchandra. From this point of view also Rishi Dayanand has played a leading role for giving Hindi a form of literary level and a standard."[52]

Most Indian languages are Sanskrit-oriented and so Hindi carrying mainly *tatsam* words is easier for the people of non-Hindi provinces, allowing it a scope for expansion. The policy of preferring *tatsam* words was an important aspect of Hindi as visualised at the national level because Sanskrit words are found in all the regional languages like Panjabi, Gujarati, Marathi, Bengali, Oriya, Assamese, Telugu, Tamil, Kannad, Malyalam, etc. Dharmadev Vidyamartand has written, "The dispassionate thinkers and leaders of most of the states have started accepting Sanskritised Hindi in Devanagari script as the national language of India."[53]

***The Influence of other Languages on Dayanand's Hindi***

Despite Dayanand's preference for *tatsam* words, his Hindi has a healthy mix of words from various others languages. Rishi Dayanand's mother tongue was Gujarati the influence of which on his Hindi is only natural. He has used many words of Gujarati in his books.[54] Besides, the use of Marathi words is also to be seen in his language.[55] He had acquired a good knowledge of Brajbhāshā while living in *Braj* region where he had been for many years as a disciple of Guru Virjanand Dandi, and the tinge of Brajbhāshā is also clearly seen at many places in Dayanand's language.[56] Besides, he would travel to different regions for the propagation of religion. So the influence of other regional languages can also be seen.[57] He paid many visits to Gujarat, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Punjab and his Hindi has a healthy dose of words from the languages of these regions.[58]

Words belonging to rural life and words in vogue in day-to-day public life are also found in Rishi Dayanand's language.[59] He has used the following words which are in vogue in day-to-day public life and which belong to the *Khaḍī Bolī* of Meerut district and Brajbhāshā: उनने (*unane*), इससे (*isase*), जिससे (*jisase*), all from Meerut district, and भया (*bhayā*), भई (*bhaī*), होय (*hoya*), from Brajbhāshā. Rishi Dayanand has used dialectal words in a large number in his illustrative tales and episodes, and also while disparaging evil practices, in order to make his language easy and comprehensible.[60] He has used sober, deeply meaningful and symbolically manifest words in books like the *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā* on the one hand, and words from rural life and dialects on the other for enlightening the uneducated persons.

Rishi Dayanand has used, for sure, the words of Urdu but only in the required context. He has used words like मज़हब (*mazahaba* = religion), फ़रिश्ता (*fariśtā* = angel), etc. mostly in the context of carrying out a critique of the Qur'ān. There these words have been used under the compulsion of the context. Dayanand has used the word प्रसन्न

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(*prasanna* = happy) in place of पसंद (*pasanda* = like). This sentence shows his attitude towards Hindi and Urdu: और जो मतमतान्तर के परस्पर विरुद्ध झगडे हैं, उनको मैं प्रसन्न नहीं करता। (And I do not like the disputes resulting into riots between different sects and sub sects.)

However, one does get to see the use of simple words of conversation of both Hindi and Urdu in his language.[61] The then current words of foreign languages can also be found in Maharshi Dayanand's language.[62]

***Coinage and Usage of New Words***

Dayanand gave currency to such words as were archaic, and were not being used in Hindi, such as आर्य (*Ārya*), आर्यावर्त्त (*Āryāvartta*) and नमस्ते (*Namaste*). Rishi Dayanand was the first to give to the Indian society *Namaste* – a loafing gem of a word.[63] These days the word *Namaste* has been accepted as an Indian word for salutation in foreign countries. Besides, Nepal has approved of *Namaste* as a word for national salutation officially.[64]

Rishi Dayanand has used ancient words in their new connotations. For example, he gave currency to the word 'Popes' for the word पाखण्डी पुरोहितों (hypocritical priests). He used the word गवर्गण्ड (*Gavarganḍa* = one filled with hollow vanity) for a cruel foolish king. He has used the word उलथा (*ulathā*) for अनुवाद (*translation*). At places he has also tried to give a *tatsam* form to some Hindi words after making slight changes. He used to call पुजारी (*pujārī* = a priest) the अरि (*ari* = enemy, one opposed to) of real पूजा (*pūjā* = worship). And so he has used the word पूजारि (*pujāri* = an enemy of real worship) in place of पुजारी (*Pujārī* = a priest). Besides, he has also coined some new words joining an element of Hindi with an element of Sanskrit such as in गड़बड़ाध्याय (*garabarādhyāya* = a chapter carrying hotchpotch), गपोड़ाध्याय (*gaporādhyāya* = a chapter carrying made-up episodes and gossips), मतलबसिन्धु (*matalabasindhu* = a sea of selfishness), पेटार्थी (*Peṭārthī* = one who asks for fulfilling his wants), etc. Rishi Dayanand has compressed all the current religions and sects of his times into four broad categories and assigned names having alliterative sounds such as पुराणी (*Purāṇī*), जैनी (*Jainī*), किरानी (*Kirānī*) and क़ुरानी (*Qurānī*). He has also given some words having a historical reference, such as पाताल (*Pātāla*), for America and त्रिविष्टप (*Triviṣṭapa*), for Tibet.

***The Use of Idioms and Proverbs***

Rishi Dayanand has made a profuse use of idioms and proverbs in his language.[65] This has considerably increased the elegance and effectiveness of his language, besides increasing its forcefulness of expression. आँख का अन्धा, गाँठ का पूरा (proving equal to one's word even if it means a huge loss to one) was his favourite expression. This has been used at all those places where relevant. Apart from this, he has also used in Hindi the sayings and idioms of Sanskrit, e.g., मूर्खाणां बलं मौनम् (Silence is the strength of the fools), भोगे रोगभयम् (The lascivious runs the risk of diseases), समान व्यसनेषु मैत्री (Those who have the same addiction befriend one another), विनाशकाले विपरीत बुद्धि (Losing one's wits when destruction is round the corner), स्वार्थी दोषं न पश्यति (The selfish person finds no fault with

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him), यादृशो वाहनः खरः (a carriage like a donkey), अन्धेनैव नीयमाना यथान्धाः (A blind man leading other blind men), नष्टे मूले नैव पत्रं न पुष्पम् (If the root is destroyed, neither leave nor fruit can be expected), धावतः स्खलनं न दोषाय भवति (Mistakes of those who make efforts are no faults of theirs). Besides these, since Swami Dayanand used to come in frequent contact with common people we also get in his language some local, dialectal and rural expressions also like, अंट सट्ट मारना (beating about the bush), सैल सपट्टा (journeying for pleasure), गपड चौथ (hotch potch), भेंट भट्टका (meeting and loafing around), गडक करना, etc.

***A Revolutionary Tone***

Rishi Dayanand's aim was to instil in Indians, a sense of respect and pride for their country, religion and race. This has made his language vigorous and ornamental. Rishi Dayanand led the movement of re-awakening in the Hindi region. He wanted to reform the Indian society through a strong wave of revolution, and for achieving this aim he had to fight against all the different creeds and sects at the same time. Poet Ramdhari Singh Dinkar writes, "No other leader as fearless as Dayanand appeared on the scene of struggling Hinduism. Dayanand's contemporary reformers were only reformers but Dayanand was moving forward with the stormy speed of a revolution. He was also the leader of the whole mankind along with being a protector of Hindu religion."[66] It is for this reason that the strength of his revolutionary personality is to be seen in its vigorous form in his language. His grouse and grief against the society which had become inert and inactive on account of idolatry, has found expression in his vigorous language.

***Simplicity, Easy Intelligibility and Clarity***

Rishi Dayanand's aim was to put across the message of Vedic religion to every person. Hence he used a language which could be easily understood by even a layman. Dr. Chandrabhanu Sonwane has written – "Simplicity is present throughout in the language used by Swami Dayanand Saraswati. The occasional complexity is due to depth of thoughts and not due to lack of clarity."[67] Therefore the *Prasād* (excellence of poetic art) is found in abundance in all of his writings.

Rishi Dayanand was one of the finest orators of his times. He was an expert in carrying the audience with him in the flow of his views and sentiments. This quality is beautifully visible in his writings also.

***Pictorial Quality***

Wherever Rishi Dayanand has written in a descriptive style, the pictorial quality of his narratives comes to the fore. This quality and its power can be vividly seen throughout in his autobiography.

***The Refined and Straight Form of Khaḍī Bolī***

Although Rishi Dayanand had come from a non-Hindi region and he had started writing after learning Hindi yet his language became progressively more and more refined and frank. As is clear from the 2nd edition of Satyarth Prakash, within only eight years he had learnt Hindi so well that he could remodel and refine its language as per

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the rules of grammar. His autobiography was published in the Theosophist Magazine of October 1879, December 1879 and November 1880. The refined and straight form of *Khaḍī Bolī* used by Rishi Dayanand more than a hundred years ago is remarkable.

***Forceful Language Matching the Emotion and the Subject***

Rishi Dayanand's language and style express very effectively his ideas and emotions. The language used in Rishi Dayanand's books matches with the subject being discussed. While composing serious books such as *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā* his language too, is sober and is pregnant with essence. While discussing deep thoughts and philosophical principles his language appears to be difficult and Sanskritised but still it retains the quality of complete understandability and it makes the subject under discussion fully clear to the reader.

The correct Aryabhāshā of Satyarth Prakash which was written about one hundred and thirty years ago presents an ideal sample of language for the Hindi litterateurs. In fact the Hindi prose got limitless power of expression from Rishi Dayanand's literature. Dr. Shivkaran Singh has also written – "The religious preacher in Dayanand Saraswati has given great power of expression and satire to Hindi prose."[68] Acharya Chatursen, the popular story writer of Hindi has written,

> Since Swami Dayanand had made Hindi the medium of writing books and speeches, Hindi acquired the capacity for stating expressly the religious, spiritual and philosophical issues and presenting these serious subjects logically after having examined them critically. He cultivated the soil and sowed the seed of love for their country, for their religion, for their race and for self pride in the people of the country. Due to all these stimulating sentiments, his ordinary language became very effective.[69]

## III
## DAYANAND'S INFLUENCE ON HINDI LITERATURE

Besides contributing to Hindi as a language, Rishi Dayanand has also influenced the entire range of creative literature of Hindi by breathing life into it through his ethical and reformative approach.

It was Dayanand who set forth the mode of carrying out criticism and exposition of earlier works on the pattern of religious scriptures. According to Chandrabhanu Sonawane, "The influence of Rishi Dayanand's style can be seen even in the apparently unconnected and remote write-ups of Hindi literature in which has taken place the growth of the style of buttressing opinions on the basis of the context, and basing them on the evidence cited from the scriptures."[70]

***Rishi Dayanand's Influence on the Bharatendu Period***

It is obviously Rishi Dayanand's influence that the writers of Bharatendu period acquired a nationalistic awareness. The Mishra Brothers who have made a remarkable

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attempt to record the literary profile of ancient and modern poets of Hindi have called the 'incipient part' of the Bharatendu era as *Dayanand period.*[71]

Bharatendu was present at the Kashi Shāstrārtha[72] and was deadly opposed to Rishi Dayanand, but his opposition lasted only for a few months.[73] At the time of *Kashi Shāstrārtha,* Bharatendu was a growing Vaishnava youth of some 19-20 years of age. At that time, the whole of Kashi was anti-Dayanand, and it is not surprising that Bharatendu also joined the chorus of opposition. But as his thoughts matured and logical power sharpened, he started developing an admiration for the reformist movement of Dayanand. When Rishi Dayanand came to Kashi for the second time, Bharatendu was among those who received him at the station.[74] When Rishi Dayanand came to Kashi the third time after the famous Kashi Shāstrārtha, Bharatendu Babu got published in 'Aryabhāshā' from Light Press, Benaras, that Shāstrārtha of Dayanand word for word which had taken place at Hoogly in Sanskrit with Pandit Taracharan Tarkaratna.[75] He published a true copy of Rishi Dayanand's book *Advaitamat Khaṇḍan* in *Kavivachan Sudhā.*[76] Moreover, he included Rishi Dayanand even in the Editorial Board of his magazine *Harishchandra Chandrikā,*[77] and would reverentially give space to Dayanand's advertisements alongside his own. Dayanand's influence on Bharatendu Harishchandra can be gauged from the fact that Bharatendu Babu who after *Kashi Shāstrārtha* (Debate) had condemned Rishi Dayanand by writing *Dūṣan Mālikā,*[78] wrote after Dayanand's death, a laudatory article entitled *Swarg mein Vichār Sabhā kā Adhiveṣan,* glorifying Dayanand's work, and saying that "he should be allotted the highest seat in Heaven."[79]

The influence of Rishi Dayanand's thoughts can be easily seen on the poetry of Bharatendu Harishchandra. At that time widow remarriage was socially prohibited; one was regarded as religiously degenerate if one went abroad, idol worship of various deities was in vogue. Rishi Dayanand supported widow remarriage, encouraged the youth to go abroad to acquire skill and technical knowledge, and gave a call for monotheism. Besides, Rishi Dayanand exposed how the selfish, obstinate and communal bigots had made interpolations in the *ārṣa* scriptures written by seers and sages. All these reforms found a welcome reflection in the poetry of Bharatendu Harishchandra. He wrote in support of widow remarriage and voyaging abroad:

विधवा विवाह निषेध कियो, व्यभिचार बढायो, रोकि विलायत गमन, कूप मण्डूक बनायो।[80]

(They had banned widow marriage and thus promoted adultery, stopped people from going abroad and thus turned them into frogs living in the confinement of the well.)

Bharatendu also wrote under the influence of Dayanand that by making people worship various deities they have been made indifferent to the great God who is our Supreme father.

बहु देवी देवता भूत प्रेतादि पुजाई। ईश्वर यों सब विमुख किये हिन्दू घबराई।।[81]

(They made people worship male and female deities, ghosts and other evil spirits. Thus Hindus got frightened on discovering that they had been indifferent to God so far.)

How real religion was undervalued has also been highlighted by Bharatendu:

रचि बहुविधि के वाक्य पुरानन मांहि घुसाये, शैव शाक्त वैष्णव अनेक मत प्रगटी चलाये।।[82]

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(They interpolated the Purāṇas with various sorts of hypocritical assertions giving birth to different sects such as Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava, etc.)

Bharatendu's lecture delivered at Balia also carries his support for the social reforms carried out by Rishi Dayanand. He also severely condemned the various hypocritical practices which had crept into Hinduism in his article वैदिकी हिंसा हिंसा न भवति (*Vaidikī hinsā hinsā na bhavati* = Vedic violence is no violence) and in the incomplete drama entitled *Prem yoginī* (A She-ascetic in Love).

The influence of Rishi Dayanand is also quite apparent on the other members of Harishchandra's group. Pratap Narayan Mishra recognised Rishi Dayanand's principles as an efficacious and sure weapon for the oncoming flood of misbeliefs from Qur'āni and Eurasian cultures.[83] In his poem *Desh Dashā,* he disparaged evil practices like idolatry, belief in incarnation and fatalism, child-marriage, worship of the planets, and casteism. Pandit Radhacharan Goswami, a writer, journalist and litterateur of the Bharatendu era was so impressed by the ideology of Rishi Dayanand that he, like Dayanand, assertively called this country Āryavartta and its people Aryas.[84] The editor of *Hindi Pradeep,* the famous essayist Balkrishna Bhatt wrote while paying an emotional tribute to Dayanand on his death,

> There is no doubt that you did not waste even a single second while busy doing welfare and good of this unfortunate India... If this holy struggle had been carried out with the same intensity in any of the countries of Europe, you would have completed the construction of the step-ladder for touching the Zenith of Progress you had undertaken to acquire, and in that case the whole of that country would have joined you as your assistant and associate.[85]

Undoubtedly, the inspiration flowing from Rishi Dayanand was there to be felt in the compositions of Mr. Bhatt. While disparaging the religious and social evils and hypocritical practices the litterateurs of the Bharatendu period adopted Dayanand's style of humour, hilarity and satire. The nationalistic sensibilities of the writers of the Bharatendu era were very acute and keen.

***Rishi Dayanand's Influence on the Dwivedi Period***

Rishi Dayanand's principles of reform for restoring the Aryan way of life, received the most articulate expression during the Dwivedi period. The founder of the Dwivedi era, Acharya Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi, whose ethical beliefs have guided the whole of the period, writes:

> There is a deep sense of reverence in me for Swami Dayanand. He was the one who carried out in a big way the purgation and purification of the society, was a great scholar of the Vedas, wrote a commentary on the Vedas in consonance with the requirements of the times, and was a great advocate of Aryan culture. The Arya Samaj that he set up is also doing great good to our country, to our religion and to our language. I regard the erudition, activities and work of the Swami as indicative of good luck of an unfortunate country."[86]

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National poet, Maithilisharan Gupt, extended forceful support to all the reformations advocated by Maharshi Dayanand, in his *Bharat Bharati*. Ramdhari Singh Dinkar writes, "The Ram of Sāket is shouting Swami Dayanand's slogan कृण्वन्तो विश्वमार्यम् (*Kṛṇvanto viśvamāryam* = Make the whole world Arya)."[87]

मानस भवन में आर्यजन जिसकी उतारे आरती। भगवान भारतवर्ष में गूँजे हमारी भारती।।[88]

(May God who is being worshipped by the good people from the core of their heart make our speech resound in our country, India!)

The national, cultural poetry in Hindi has accorded special importance and a high place to Rishi Dayanand. Balkrishna Sharma, while displaying his faith in Rishi Dayanand has said:-

"दयानन्द हो? हिन्दूपन की, या पहली परिपाटी हो? हे महर्षि! क्या आर्यजगत् के पथ की मूर्तिमती घाटी हो?
अथवा तुम पाखण्ड खण्डिनी विजय-पताका की लाठी हो? तुम ही सब कुछ हो भारत की, जागृति की पहली करवट हो।"[89]

(Are you Dayanand? Or, are you one of the original Hindus of yore? O Maharshi! Are you the very path in its physical form for all the Aryans to tread on? Or, are you the staff on which to hoist the flag of victory calling for demolishing all hypocritical practices of religious and social nature? As a matter of fact, you are everything for India in as much as you have shaken us for the first time to wake up).

It is clear that the wake-up call carried in the literature of the Dwivedi era is the natural sweet outcome of the new awakening brought about by Dayanand. *Dayanand Gaurav Gāna* by Ayodhya Singh Upadhyaya Hariaudh who was the topmost poet of the Dwivedi era, and the writer of *Priya Prawās*, the first epic in *Khaḍī Bolī*, also points to the same outcome:

वैदिकता विधि-पूत, वैदिका वन्दनीय बलि। वेद-विकच-अरविन्द मंत्र-मकरंद मत्त अलि।।
आर्यभाव कमनीय रत्न के अनुपम आकर। विविध अन्धविश्वास तिमिर के विदित प्रभाकर।।
नाना विराध वारिद पवन कदाचार कानन दहन। है निरानन्द-तरु-वृन्द के दयानन्द-आनन्द घन।।[90]

(Having been baptised the Vedic way, having passed through ordeals and having made the sacrifice for Vedic ideals – such a one you deserve all our reverence. You are elated with the fragrance emanating from the Vedic hymns as is intoxicated an *ali* (a black bee) from the aroma oozing from the filament of lotus. You are a matchlessly wonderful mine of gems lying in you in the form of noble ideas and sentiments. You are the incarnate Sun which has dispelled the darkness flowing from various kinds of blind faith. You are like that gust of wind which pushes away all clouds of opposition. And last but not least, Dayanand! You are like that cloud which generates all happiness in an otherwise dry and dreary grove.)

Ram Naresh Tripathi, also of the Dwivedi era, while paying a tribute to Rishi Dayanand, wrote:

लोकहित चिंतन में गृहसुख-त्यागी, वेद-ब्रह्म का अनन्य अनुरागी ऊर्ध्वरेता था।
ज्ञानी, अद्वितीय अभिमानी आर्य सभ्यता का, जीवन का दानी धर्म-ग्रन्थ का प्रणेता था।
हरी के समान कोटि-कोटि शिवमण्डल में, विकट विरोधियों के वृन्द का विजेता था।
भारत के भाग्य का भविष्यरूप दयानन्द, शंकर के बाद हिन्दुओं में एक नेता था।[91]

(He left his household and the comforts thereof for the welfare of the people. He was an abstinent celibate and was unique in holding the Veda and Almighty God in the

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highest esteem. He was unparalleled in erudition and was proud of the Aryan civilisation and culture as none else. He devoted his whole life to the cause of humanity and produced a religious treatise. He vanquished the whole group of his formidable opponents so decisively and so distinctly as the mythological character 'Hari' is believed to have done. He was the one to have worked for a bright future of Indians. He was also the one who led the Hindu community so effectively as none after Shankara had done.)

The anecdotal, didactic, moral, sacred and ethical contents that we have in the Hindi literature of this period are all an influence of Rishi Dayanand. Mentioning these influences, Vijendra Narayan Singh writes: "It was Dayanand's influence that logicalism got established in the Bharatendu period, and more than that in the Dwivedi period."[92]

***Dayanand's influence on the Chāyāvādī (Romantic) Period***

Rishi Dayanand's influence on the poetry of romantic period is also clearly visible. Even Jai Shankar Prasad, a devotee of Lord Shiva, could not resist being influenced by Rishi Dayanand. His *Cāṇakya* was a true embodiment of the qualities of an Arya. Mahadevi Varma imported in Hindi a translated form of the sum and substance of Vedic hymns, a remarkable literary and social phenomenon, because while on the one hand, women were deprived by the orthodoxy of the right to read the Vedic hymns, on the other hand a woman rendered many Vedic hymns in sweet-sounding Hindi poetry in her book *Saptavarna*. A verbatim translation of many of the Vedic hymns is also to be seen in Sumitranandan Pant's poetry. This is due to the influence of Rishi Dayanand only.

On the whole, the nationalism of the poets of the Bharatendu period, the deep faith in morality and cultural integrity of the poets of the Dwivedi period, looking at Ram and Krishna as great humans (rather than as God), giving a logical explanation to Paurāṇic episodes, the contemplative presentation of Vedic literature, the sweet-sounding translation of the sum and substance of the Vedas and other scriptures by *Chāyāvādī* poets, the quick and easy understanding of the changing times by the modern poets, independent and original thinking, intelligent and rational analysis and anti-orthodoxy are all due to the influence of Rishi Dayanand.

The great poet Suryakant Tripathi Nirala lavishly admired the epoch-making Rishi Dayanand,

> Not even an iota of the ideals that we get to see of character, health, sacrifice, knowledge and courteous conduct in Rishi Dayanand is possible from a non-Indian type of western education. Besides, Dayanand himself is an embodiment of the amount of knowledge and the practice of ideals that is possible only in case of a noble person. Meaning thereby, Maharshi Dayanand's person itself is the condemnation of the belief held by some persons that the Vedic or ancient system of education cannot make a person as high-minded as the English education does. There is no example to be seen that anyone could excel Maharshi Dayanand as a human... Swamiji is a protagonist of Hindi envisioned as the national language. This has been the language of the propagation of Arya Samajist beliefs and ideals."[93]

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***Rishi Dayanand's Influence on the Prose Writers***

It is not that Rishi Dayanand influenced only the poets. We have already seen that the contribution of Dayanand has been immense to Hindi prose as well. Naturally then the writers of the various genres of Hindi prose could not but be influenced by Dayanand. Munshi Premchand's life, and his initial novels and stories were flooded with Rishi Dayanand's and Arya Samajist ideas. It was only because of Arya Samaj that the common man got a voice for the first time in his novels. He has written about Rishi Dayanand,

> I heartily welcome Swami Dayanand Saraswati as the first person to have uplifted the position and status of woman. He was a Messiah for the widows and those called Shudras. Rishi Dayanand was the first person to have got women the right to study the Vedas. He presented to us what the real form of religion is. I am deeply influenced by his ideas.[94]

While describing the influence of Rishi Dayanand on him, Dr. Harivansh Rai Bachchan has written, "At one time I was a member of Arya Kumar Sabha (A society of young Arya Samajists) and also of the Arya Samaj. My independent thinking is due to the influence of Dayanand. I regard Rishi Dayanand as a grand human and as a rehabilitator and a saviour of the Vedas,"[95]

Acharya Hazari Prasad Dwivedi has expressed thus the influence of Rishi Dayanand on Hindi language and literature:

> The Arya Samaj, under the leadership of Rishi Dayanand, waged a war simultaneously against the orthodox *Sanātani* Hindus, against Christians who had assaulted Hindu religion and against the various religious sects and sub-sects that had proliferated in the country. In the days of Dayanand the *shāstrārthas* had created bustle with an uproar. The newspapers and periodicals were full of questions and counter-questions, answers and supplemental queries, satires and sarcasms. The Hindi prose that was in the making at that time was being harnessed with new power and potency. These debates and verbal duels in writing enriched the language immensely, and also helped it acquire maturity of expression. Swami Dayanand and his followers gave a new lease of life to Hindi and Sanskrit and a fillip to the study of these two languages.[96]

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44. Vishnu Prabhakar, *op. cit.*, p. 89.
45. Shri Prakash, *Dayanand ke Sapnon kā Arya Samaj,* Ratnakumari Sansthan, Allahabad, p. 271.
46. उनकी भाषा में पुनरपि, पुरश्चरण, पुनरुक्त, ऐक्यमत, प्रवृत्त, निरुद्यम, अनध्याय, ऐकमत्य, पुनश्च, अर्थात्, नैरोग्य जैसे शब्दों का प्रयोग सर्वत्र मिल जाता है। उन्होंने किंचित, किंचिन्मात्र, क्षुधा, पिपासा, तुल्य, नाई (तरह), मिथ्या आदि तत्सम शब्दों का व्यवहार किया है। उनकी भाषा में संस्कृत के दार्शनिक शब्दों का प्रयोग भी हुआ है, जैसे – संयोगज, प्राग्भावात्, परिच्छिन्न, अत्युद्यत आदि। आधुनिक विदेशी शब्द तोप, बन्दूक, वकील आदि के लिए उन्होंने शतघ्नी, भुशुंडी, प्राड्विवाक, जैसे प्राचीन संस्कृत शब्द प्रस्तुत किये हैं। हिन्दी में अप्रचलित शब्द जैसे, सर्वतंत्र, विडालाक्ष, अव्याहतगति आदि का प्रयोग भी मिलता है। रंगों और रसों के लिए संस्कृत के शब्दों का प्रयोग, जैसे – रक्त, हरित, श्वेत, पीत, कृष्ण तथा मिष्ट, क्षार, कटुक, तिक्त, अम्ल आदि।
47. यथा – सन्तान, सामर्थ्य, अग्नि, आत्मा, पुस्तक, आयु, प्रलय, विजय इत्यादि।
48. जैसे – मच्छी (मछली), चौतरी (चौपाल), हाड़-गौड़, सुधा (सीधा), क्रोड (करोड़), कै प्रकार (कितने प्रकार) इत्यादि।
49. Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash,* p. 19.
50. Swami Dayanand, *Āryābhivinaya,* p. 4; हे सच्चिदानन्द-स्वरूप, हे नित्य शुद्ध-बुद्ध-मुक्त स्वभाव... व्यापक सूक्ष्माच्छेद्य
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55. जैसे अशक्य, शिक्षा (दण्ड देने के अर्थ में)
56. उन्होंने होवे, रहै, चाहै, देनेहारा, जीतनेहारा, करनेहारा, ताड़नेहारा, छुड़ानेहारा, देखनेहारा, बदलनेहारा, बनानेहारा, सिरजनहारा इत्यादि शब्दों का प्रयोग किया है। 'रखता हूँ' क्रिया के लिए, 'धरता हूँ' का प्रयोग अधिकतर किया है।
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59. जैसे – मच्छी (मछली), चौतरी (चौपाल), हाड़-गौड़, सुधा (सीधा), क्रोड (करोड़), कै प्रकार (कितने प्रकार) इत्यादि।
60. जैसे कि तोड़ताडकर, लड़ाई-बखेड़ा, भीड़-भड़क्का, खण्ड-बण्ड, ऊटपटांग, हल्ला-गुल्ला, गपोड़ा, भोजन-भट्ट, चटक-मटक, अण्ड-बण्ड, हुड़दंगा, हाय रे दैय्या, एलो, धर्म से कहता हूँ, चल बे, अबे, मुख संभल के बोल, अहो ऐसी बात है।
61. मार के मारे झट बतला दिया। तब सब कोष लूट, मार कूटकर पोप और उनके चेलों को गुलाम, बिगारी बना पिसना पिसवाया, घास खुदवाया, मल-मूत्रादि उठवाया और चना खाने को दिया।
62. यथा – क़यामत, दोज़ख़, रसूल, बहिश्त, गवाही, शरीक, क़त्ल, कुफ्र, दीन, रूह, वास्ते जैसे अरबी फ़ारसी के शब्द तथा कलेक्टर, गवर्नर, फिलासफी, पोलिटिक्स इत्यादि अंग्रेजी के शब्द भी मिल जाते हैं।
63. Chandrabhanu Sonvane, 1975, *Hindi Gadya Sāhitya,* Granthan Rambag, Kanpur, p. 265.
64. Rajendra, *Namaste Banām Namaskār,* Ved Mandir, Atroli, Aligarh, first edition, p. 6.
65. दाल न गलना, दाँत तोड़ डालना, धक्के खाना, धुर्रे उड़ा देना, दूर के ढोल अच्छे, अन्धों में काना राजा, सिर, सब अन्न बारह पसेरी, पल्ले न पड़ना, लड़कों का खिलौना, मन के गुलगुले खाना, सन् के छूछे गोले चलाना, अपना-अपना छप्पर अपने-अपने हाथ से छाना, उल्टा चोर कोतवाल को दण्डे, हाथी के दाँत खाने के भिन्न और दिखाने के भिन्न होते हैं, चले तो चौबेजी छब्बेजी बनने को, गाँठ के दो खोकर दुबेजी बन गए, कहीं की ईंट कहीं का रोड़ा, भानुमति ने कुनबा जोड़ा, जैसे प्रेतनाथ वैसे भूतनाथ, जैसे नागनाथ वैसे साँपनाथ,

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अटकलपच्चू कूप के समान चतुराई दिखलाई है, हल्दी की गाँठ के बल पर, लिख कर बैठे रहे, यह व्याघ्र की खाल उघड़कर सब कलई खुल जाएगी, भूषण को दूषण करके माना करते हैं तो माना करें।

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67. Chandrabhanu Sonvane, *op. cit.*, p. 66.
68. Shivkaran Singh, 1967, *Ālochanā ke Badalte Māndaṇḍ aur Hindi Sāhitya*, Allahabad, p. 374.
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71. Mishar Bandu, *Misharbandu Vinod*, part 3, Ganga Pustakmala Office, Lucknow, p. 4.
72. Lekhram, 1971, *Maharshi Dayanand kā Jīvan Charitra*, Arya Samaj Naya Bans, Delhi, p. 120.
73. *Ibid.*, p. 178.
74. Bhawani Lal Bhārtiya, *Maharshi Dayanand ke Bhagat, Prashansak aur Satsangī*, Ajmer, p. 15.
75. Yudhishthira Minansaka, 1983, *Rishi Dayanand Saraswati ke Granthon kā Itihāsa*, Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Bahalgarh, Sonepat, p. 255.
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(Translated from Hindi to English by Khazan Singh Gulia)

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# CHAPTER 18

# The D.A.V. Movement in Retrospect

*R.C. Jeewan*

Swami Dayanand laid much emphasis on the eradication of illiteracy, as he considered education to be a powerful means of change in the society. He laid down in the twentieth principle of Arya Samaj of Bombay that all Arya Samajs should run schools, though, separate for boys and girls. During the life time of Maharshi Dayanand itself, the Aryas of Lahore, the most active centre of Arya Samaj, felt the need of an institution in which Vedic literature could be taught along with the English language.[1] In Christian schools, too much emphasis was laid on the teaching of the Bible. So the Aryas wanted to run a national school totally controlled by the Indians where their own religion could be studied.[2] In 1883, all the twenty-seven students of a class in a mission school were being converted to Christianity. Such a large scale conversion of educated youth was a grave concern for the Arya Samaj. So Arya Samajists began thinking of starting an Anglo-Aryan school where English and Sanskrit could be taught with little or no provision for the teaching of Persian. It was yet to be decided whether it be named Anglo-Aryan or Anglo-Vedic.[3]

The first Indian Education Commission was instituted under the chairmanship of William Hunter by Lord Ripon on February 3, 1882 to decide the language of instruction and administration.[4] In those days there was no provision for teaching Hindi and Sanskrit in schools. Instead, Persian and Urdu were being taught. Arya Samajists of Lahore and Multan submitted memoranda in favour of Hindi and Devanagari script in June 1882.[5] Rishi Dayanand desired the foundation of education to be indigenous. Sanskrit and Vedic literature were to be given primacy, followed by other languages like Hindi, English and subjects related to Science and Technology.[6]

Swami Dayanand was deep in the midst of his missionary pursuits, when he was administered a fatal dose of poison by his detractors. The news spread like a wild fire in

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the Arya Samajist circles. Guru Datta Vidyarthi, a young and upcoming scholar, then just eighteen years of age, had been deputed to accompany Lala Jivan Das, Vice President of the Lahore Arya Samaj, to attend on the ailing Swamiji. His sad demise occurred on October 30, 1883 in the presence of his followers who had gathered from different places. Young Guru Datta was a witness to this unusual spectre of the 'dying Greatness'[7] perfectly at peace and with Gāyatrī mantra on his lips. The tender heart of Guru Datta underwent a huge transformation that not only metamorphosed his very being but was later also responsible for his enthusiasm in carrying forward the mission of the Rishi.

The followers and disciples of Swamiji were not to belie his hopes and aspirations and took no time to overcome the tremendous grief. The Punjab Arya leadership decided to honour his memory in a befitting manner, and they could not think of a better memorial than setting up a good educational institution at Lahore, the capital of Punjab. Within nine days of the sad event, a memorial meeting was called by the Lahore Arya Samaj.[8] In this meeting, Guru Datta narrated how Swamiji passed the last few days of his life and how manfully he bore the illness for more than a month. He made an impassioned speech and a spirited appeal to the audience, that in keeping with the pronouncements, programmes and policies of the Rishi, the most prudent way of commemorating his death would be to establish an educational institution in his honour.[9]

The proposal to raise an educational institution was an effort to save the youth from the onslaughts of missionaries and the western culture, and providing them with an opportunity to know about their ancient cultural heritage, the pride of the nation. It was desired to teach *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, *Nighaṇṭu* and *Nirukta* in the proposed institution so that the Vedas could be properly understood by means of these authentic texts.[10] It, therefore, found immediate favour with the Arya Samajists, who seized this opportunity to seriously take the mission of the Swami, forward.

Lajpat Rai described the mood of this public meeting held on November 9[11]:

> On this occasion, the spirit of grief had given place to that of gratefulness, and the touch of enthusiasm seemed to reverberate through every nerve and heart. There was one united purpose that the glorious life of the departed Swami should be immortalised in this nether world and the proposal to found an Anglo-Vedic College in honour of his memory was unanimously and enthusiastically adopted. The sight that followed was worth observing. Though the meeting was composed mostly of the middle class men, from 7,000 to 8,000 rupees were subscribed on the spot. Women and children and even poor menials zealously came forward with their mite.[12]

The Arya Samajists started collecting money for the proposed college. A committee comprising Lala Lal Chand, Bhai Jawahar Singh, Lala Madan Singh, Lala Jivan Das and Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi was formed to raise funds for the purpose. Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi was a great scholar, whose immense knowledge and magical personality shone in his eloquence. His oratory was a rare treat to the listeners who would flock in

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large numbers to hear him. He expressed his thought with ease, sobriety and precision which engaged and delighted his audience. His speeches overflowed with Vedic wisdom and were full of reverence for the mission of Rishi Dayanand. Besides being passionate and emotional, the contents were highly elevating, educating and inspiring for the masses.[13] He was, therefore, in great demand for *Veda prachār* in the anniversary functions of Arya Samajs, particularly in Northern India. He in particular and the committee in general, toured extensively for the collection of funds. At the end of his discourse, he would make a passionate appeal for liberal donations for the D.A.V. movement. Public response to his call for subscription in aid of the D.A.V. College was enormous and a lot of money was collected for the cause.

Apart from collection of funds for raising buildings and meeting huge infrastructural needs, the organisers found themselves faced with numerous other daunting problems such as evolving a constitution for management, defining the aims and objectives of the proposed institution, framing the syllabi and courses of study etc. Efforts for unanimity on contentious issues were set afoot. The constitution of the management committee was deliberated upon in as many as nine meetings held during the last twenty days of November 1885.[14] The rules and by-laws were drafted unanimously. The first formal meeting of the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College Society was held on January 31, 1886 where nine representatives of the Arya Samajs of Lahore, Amritsar, Multan, Gujranwala, Ludhiana and Rohtak passed the rules relating to the constitution. These leaders of the Arya Samaj had foreseen the dangers that could threaten the very existence and future of the institution and so carefully insulated it from non-believers in accordance with the cardinal principles of Arya Samaj. Adequate provisions were made in the rules so that the management remained in the hands of elected representatives of the Arya Samajs which had contributed to its funds. However, some distinguished personalities from various professions, who, in the considered opinion of the elected representatives could be helpful in furtherance of programmes of the society, could also be inducted.[15] It was also customary not to seek monetary assistance from the British Government, so as to maintain the spirit of self-help and self-reliance and ensure the least interference by extraneous forces in the day to day functioning. Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College Trust and Managing Committee was informally constituted.

Meanwhile, a twenty-two year old young graduate, Hansraj, fresh from college, volunteered to become the Head Master of this school, without accepting a penny. This timely offer made things easier for the organisers of the movement. His offer had the sanction of his elder brother Mulk Raj Bhalla, who had most willingly agreed to share his scanty salary of rupees eighty per month with him. This call of duty to the religion and to the motherland is simply singular and must never be ignored while recording the success story of the D.A.V. movement. His was a life of simplicity, devotion and sacrifice.[16] Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, the founder of Islamia College Aligarh once visited D.A.V. College Lahore and there he remarked: "The building, science block and library of my college is better than yours but I have no Hansraj."[17]

On February 27, 1886, the first meeting of the Managing Committee of the D.A.V. College Society consisting of nineteen members was held. It was required to

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frame rules and regulations relating to several matters under the control of the Managing committee and for the conduct of its business. It also decided upon the practical steps required to be taken immediately for opening the high school and its accompaniments, the boarding house etc.

An administrative structure was put in place in the meeting held on March 20. It consisted of the following: Lal Chand as President and Treasurer, Ishwar Das and Jwala Sahai as Vice-Presidents, Madan Singh as Secretary and Guru Datta Vidyarthi as a member. On the transfer of Madan Singh, Jivan Das was appointed Officiating Secretary and Guru Datta as Assistant Secretary in December 1886. The Executive Committee included Lal Chand, Ishwar Das M.A., Jwala Sahai contractor, Pandit Guru Datta M.A., Sain Das, Madan Singh, Ganga Ram Civil Engineer, Jivan Das, Mulraj and Dwarka Das.[18] Guru Datta Vidyarthi served as Joint Secretary (April 1887-1888) and then as Secretary (1888-1889). Lajpat Rai and Hansraj were taken as members later on.[19]

On June 1, 1886, a red letter day in the history of modern Punjab, the first independent educational institution of India, Dayanand Anglo-Vedic High School, Lahore, opened its portals to the students. The School became popular in no time. In the course of a few days, over 300 students joined the school. By the year end 'the number rose to 955; with 505 in the high classes, 165 in the middle classes, and 285 in the primary classes.

The D.A.V. College Managing Committee and Trust was registered on August 17, 1886 with nineteen members of the society. The objectives of the society were declared as the following:

1. To establish an Anglo-Vedic College in Punjab which shall include a school, a college and boarding house as a memorial in honour of Swami Dayanand Saraswati with the following joint purposes viz.:

a. To encourage, improve and enforce the study of Hindi literature,
b. To encourage and enforce the study of classical Sanskrit and of Vedas,
c. To encourage and enforce the study of English literature and science, both theoretical and applied.

2. To provide means for giving technical education in connection with Anglo-Vedic College Institution as far as it is not inconsistent with the proper accomplishment of the first objective.[20]

***Internal Problems and Hurdles before the Movement***

The progenitors of the movement were staunch advocates of Vedic wisdom and were sincerely committed to spreading the Rishi's message. They had an understanding of the modern world too, which required a harmonious fusion of eastern lore with western science and technology. They had rightly named the memorial institution, Dayanand Anglo-Vedic. The first President of the memorial committee, Lala Lal Chand, clearly stated:

> The primary object will be to weld together the educated and the uneducated masses by encouraging national language and vernaculars, to spread knowledge of moral and spiritual truths by insisting on the study of classical Sanskrit, to

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assist the formation of sound and energetic habits by a regulated mode of living, to encourage sound acquaintance of English Literature and to afford a stimulus to the material progress of the country by spreading the knowledge of the physical and applied science.[21]

The other contentious issue was the framing of courses of study of Classical Sanskrit at all levels in tune with the prescription of the Rishi himself. Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi was a strong votary of the inclusion of *Aṣṭādhyāyī* as a part of syllabi at all levels. Guru Datta held sway in the beginning and the curriculum proposed by him was accepted by the D.A.V. Managing Committee. It was decided to teach Hindi, Arithmetic, Sanskrit and English (Urdu optional only) from the first, second, third and fourth classes respectively. The study of *Aṣṭādhyāyī* was also introduced; the first and second chapters with meaning were to be taught in two sections of class VI; the third, fourth and fifth chapters in class VII, and the last three chapters in class VIII. In classes IX and X, only a revision of various portions was intended to be taken up. Unlike the Government schools, Persian was not taught at all. Hindi was the medium of instruction in the primary and the middle classes and English in the upper classes.[22]

By the time, the college came into being, 'visible differences' started cropping up, more so in deciding the courses of study in various classes. These were further fanned by the imminent and unfortunate division among the rank and file of the Arya Samaj, on the question of non-vegetarian diet, despite Swami Dayanand having categorically mandated against it in Satyarth Prakash, chapter 10. The faction favouring a meat-diet had erroneously maintained that the teachings of Swami Dayanand were not binding on the Arya Samaj and that its members need believe only in the Ten Principles and nothing beyond that. They strongly refuted the right of the Samaj to question an individual's right of private judgment in matters not covered in the Ten Principles. Guru Datta took strong objection to this view point. He had on his side, many prominent Arya Samajists of Punjab including Mahatma Munshiram, Master Durga Prasad, Lala Jivan Das, Master Atmaram, Pandit Rambhaj Dutt etc. But, the never ending debate continued to haunt the Arya Samajist unity. The wedge thus created had a hugely adverse effect on the curriculum-plans of Guru Datta. The opposing faction did everything to jeopardise his efforts and favoured the teaching of *Aṣṭādhyāyī* and Vedic studies only to a limited extent. They also wanted the college to be an affiliated unit of the University. Consequently, Guru Datta's vision of the college suffered a serious set-back and his proposal could not be accepted in totality. Thanks to the sagacity and wisdom of Pandit Guru Datta and the foresight of Lala Lal Chand, the issue was sorted out without too many visible fissures in the society, but it did create fault-lines leading to an unfortunate split in Arya Samaj with, of course, a strong faction led by Mahatma Munshiram working untiringly for establishing another equally strong Educational Movement – 'The Gurukula'.

It may be mentioned here that Rai Mulraj was not in favour of introducing *Aṣṭādhyāyī* in the scheme of studies. In a letter he recorded, "I am doubtful whether we could find many students at present, who would be willing to read in the Dayanand College if they had to read *Piṅgal sūtra, Uṅādī Kosh* and *Bhūmikā*, besides their Sanskrit

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course. The result of introducing these will very likely be to drive students to take up Persian instead of Sanskrit, and if Persian is abolished, then very few, if any, students will care to attend the Dayanand College."[23] The spirit behind the College movement was Pandit Guru Datta. After his death in March 1890, the movement took a different turn. To carry on with an education movement which was not in consonance with the prevailing one was a difficult job. The movement drifted towards the prevailing system of education in establishing a network of D.A.V. colleges and schools. The leadership followed the line of action of Rai Mulraj and they set themselves on a practical and worldly course. Their education was what paid, not what built scholars of repute committed to Vedas, which it was originally meant to create.[24]

***The D.A.V. College***

Seeing their institution grow by leaps and bounds, leaders of the Samaj were happy, but not contented. Their aim was a college and they literally worked day and night, to achieve the goal. Their sincere and untiring efforts bore fruit and the D.A.V. College came up on June 1, 1888. Initially, it was up to the graduate level, and received a good response from the students. The teaching was of a high standard. The college also had a quality building and a beautiful boarding house.

After some time, in response to the popular demand, post-graduate classes were started in several subjects in Arts and Sciences. In 1897, vocational Engineering classes were also added. This was followed by Ayurvedic classes in 1899.

The college now had the following faculties:

(i) Languages faculty, comprising Sanskrit, Hindi, English, Urdu, Persian, etc.
(ii) Arts and Humanities with History, Political Science, Economics, Philosophy (Eastern and Modern), Logic, etc.
(iii) Sciences, i.e., elementary Physics, Chemistry, Botany, Biology and higher Mathematics.[25]

Lala Hansraj was appointed the Principal of the college. Eminent lecturers like Sain Das, Ram Rattan, Mehar Chand, Gokal Chand, Bhai Parmanand, Balmukand, etc. did their work with utmost devotion. As a result, it became the most popular college of Lahore. The students got the best possible education at the lowest cost, as evident from the following Table:

**Table: Enrolment and Tuition Fee in Lahore Colleges, 1897-98[26]**

| College | Hindu students | Muslim students | Sikh students | Christian students | Others | Fee per student (Rs.) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Government College | 149 | 60 | 26 | 0 | 0 | 81.88 |
| Forman Christian College | 114 | 69 | 13 | 27 | 2 | 62.09 |
| D.A.V. College | 377 | 2 | 36 | 0 | 0 | 32.8 |

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An unusual but praiseworthy aspect of the D.A.V. Management's policy in running the college was that it did not apply for Government grants. The Management preferred academic autonomy and independence to Government funding. It ran the show with its own funds collected through donations. It was a national venture, after all!

The Arya Samaj institutions worked, with devoted of Indian teachers, unaided by any foreign agencies. The managing committees had no non-Indian. No British officials were ever invited to chair their functions. This made the government suspicious of the aims and intentions of the organisers and their attitude was termed as 'exclusiveness'. Ramsay MacDonald visited Lahore in 1910 and Lala Lajpat Rai invited him to his house. Lalaji told him that the British Government unnecessarily thought of the Arya Samaj and its institutions, as its enemy, though these were engaged in improving the condition of the people in social and educational fields. Ramsay MacDonald replied,

> The natural consequence of both these things will be that there will be political awakening among the people without which they cannot succeed and they will imbue the people with the idea of political freedom.[27]

This approach and the later developments made the institution a suspect in the eyes of the government. It did not appreciate the spirit of self-help and self-reliance, and took it as a cover up for running anti-Government activities. Lala Lajpat Rai explained the phenomenon quite beautifully:

> No bureaucracy loves people who can do big things without their help and guidance; much less a foreign bureaucracy. They wish to keep the strings of all public activities in their own hands, or in the hands of those who can be used as tools. We set a different standard and so we were disliked. Once or twice when we sought their help to acquire land for a building-site and play-grounds, they would not oblige. Lately, they have compulsorily taken a piece of land which we had secured with great trouble after protracted litigation and refused to give us in lieu one of the Government plots lying under our own walls.[28]

The Punjab Arya Samaj took it as a challenge, held its head high and moved on. By its hard work and sincerity of purpose, it achieved success, despite the unwelcoming bureaucracy. The college grew from strength to strength, and became the most popular institution in the Land of Five Rivers. The people were happy. The Management was satisfied. Lala Lajpat Rai portrayed the picture of progress that the institution made in a short span of thirty years:

> The feeble seeding planted in 1886 by even more feeble hands, in the course of time, grew into a stately tree, and was in 1914 the biggest institution in Northern India, and probably the second in the whole of India, in point of numbers.[29]

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***On the Road to Progress***

Due to the sharp differences among the members, the spilt was obvious. However, after the split, the D.A.V. movement stepped up its activities. The college made huge progress. Although the movement had originated at Lahore, it did not remain confined there. The activism exhibited by the Lahore Arya Samaj showed the path, and presented an opportunity to replicate the success story at other places too. The effect was cascading and un-stoppable was the zeal of the followers of Rishi Dayanand. Efforts at various other places also brought about the envisaged results. Consequently, many more institutions started functioning effectively under the stewardship of Mahatma Hansraj and his successors. The ripple effect of the D.A.V. movement gave a perceptible boost to the enthusiasm for social work and academic activity and hence to the general progress of the community. D.A.V. College Jalandhar founded and nurtured by Pandit Mehar Chand became another nucleus to stimulate growth in the Doaba region.

The 'D.A.V.' seed proved exceptionally potent and could find roots everywhere, even in educationally virgin and barren lands throughout Northern India.

The D.A.V. College Managing Committee also established a Vedic Research Library to give a boost to research in the field of ancient Indian religion and culture and named it Lal Chand Research Library, Lahore in the memory of its first President, Rai Bahadur Lal Chand, in the year 1917. The efforts of people like Ram Gopal Shastri, Ram Lubhaya Goswami, Anant Kumar Shastri, Pandit Bhagavaddatta and a number of others need to be acknowledged for the collection of over 8,386 manuscripts and nearly 11,000 old and rare books of significance. After the partition of the country, the nearly impossible task of transporting these books and manuscripts was carried out by Acharya Vishvabandhu, Bawa Praduman Singh and Dr. Tulsi Das the then Principal of Government Medical College, Amritsar and later the first Director of P.G.I. Chandigarh. The army authorities engaged in the humanitarian task of saving the lives of marooned refugees, helped in bringing these books to the Indian side of the border.

At the time of Independence, the D.A.V. College Trust and Managing Society was the biggest educational body, running a number of colleges, polytechnics and schools, most of which were located on the other side of the newly demarcated border. The partition of the country dealt a serious body blow to the D.A.V. College movement, almost threatening its annihilation. A conservative estimate of the loss ran into several crores of rupees. The headquarters of the Society located at Lahore fell to the lot of Pakistan. Dr. Mehr Chand Mahajan, who later took over the reins of the battered D.A.V. College Trust and Managing Society, described the situation in his autobiography thus:

> (The Managing Society) had suffered considerably as a result of the partition. It had lost over two crores of its assets which by self-help and by charity of the poor and middle class people in Punjab it had built up in the form of different institutions. It had the biggest boys' college in Lahore with over 1,000 students. Its High School had about 1,500 boys on its roll. It had a girls' college affiliated to the University up to B.A. degree. It had an Ayurvedic College with a hospital attached to it and a pharmacy. A technical college had been built in which machinery imported from Czechoslovakia and Germany had been installed and

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boys were being prepared for engineering diploma in mechanical and electrical engineering. It had an industrial school in which different trades were taught. Besides these big institutions it had a number of colleges in the moffusil and also a very considerable number of schools.[30]

## THE DEVELOPMENTS AFTER 1947

After the partition in 1947, the Government of India did not accept the claims of the D.A.V. Trust and Management. The revival of the D.A.V. institutions was as such, a huge problem. The Trust and Management went back to their old principle of self-help. They set up the office of the Society at Jalandhar. Principal Mehar Chand, D.A.V. College, Lahore, had been able to bring to India some liquid assets of the Committee, which were of great help. The D.A.V. institutions of Lahore were shifted to Ambala and Jalandhar. Lala Balraj, the eldest son of Mahatma Hansraj and Master Nand Lal looked after the Trust and Management there for some time before it was shifted to New Delhi. Justice Mehr Chand Mahajan became its President in 1955 after his retirement. His able and inspiring leadership infused new life and vigour into the movement and enabled the management to find its feet once again in those crucial times.

Justice Mahajan opened a large number of new institutions all over the country. There was, no looking back after that. His successors like Dr. G.L. Dutta, Justice Jiwan Lal Kapoor, Lala Suraj Bhan, Prof. Veda Vyas and others worked hard and opened new institutions at many places including Delhi, Ambala, Chandigarh, Jalandhar, Amritsar, Batala, Abohar, Bhathinda, Hisar, Karnal, Nakodhar, Philaur, and Kangra. It was a result of the sincere and self-less efforts of dedicated Principals and lecturers like Bahadur Mal, Bhagwan Das, Gian Chand, N.D. Grover, B.S. Bahl, Triloki Nath, and others that the movement touched lofty heights.[31]

In the late seventies and early eighties of the nineteenth century, a novel concept of self-supporting Public Schools was introduced. It soon caught the fancy of the people. As a result, hundreds of public schools were opened in different states. The trend continues till date. At present, the D.A.V. Trust and Management effectively runs educational institutions imparting quality education in Arts, Commerce, Science, Medicine, Technology and Business Management. These include degree and postgraduate colleges, professional and technical institutes, research institutes, directly managed schools, aided schools, public and model schools. Their number stands at a staggering 757. There are 51 colleges, 27 professional and technical institutes, 11 research institutes, 31 directly managed aided schools, 48 affiliated aided school and 584 public and model schools in 22 states throughout the country. A D.A.V. University is also operational in the outskirts of Jalandhar and attracts students from all over India.

Undoubtedly, the D.A.V. Movement could not rise up to the expectations of Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi. After his early death, it was not even possible. However, Mahatma Hansraj nourished this institution with such care and devotion that it became a successful All India Educational Movement. Inspired by the success of this experiment, others followed suit. It resulted in a wide spread of education among the masses. This provided the much-needed educated man-power to independent India. In

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the absence of D.A.V. institutions, the elite would have perhaps joined the Christian institutions, leading to the conversion of some, and a loss of pride in our rich cultural heritage, in general.

Dr. Punam Suri, grandson of Mahatma Anand Swami, is the president of this organisation since January 2012.

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11. The correct date of this meeting is November 8, 1883 and not November 9, See Ram Prakash, Dr., *op. cit.*, p. 44, note no. 5.
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28. Lajpat Rai, Lala, *Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi: Life and Works*, pp. 141-142.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 140.
30. Mehr Chand Mahajan, *op. cit.*, pp. 220-221.
31. Principal Bhagwan Das started the college at Chandigarh, B.S. Bahl at Amritsar and N.D. Grover in Abohar area. Principal Grover also established several public schools in Bihar and Jharkhand.

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# CHAPTER 19

# Gurukula Kangri Vishwavidyalaya: An Experiment in Ārṣa Education System

*Jaidev Vedalankar*

Like any other educational institution of long standing, the story of the genesis and growth of Gurukula[1] Kangri[2] is marked by the smooth and the rough, the easy and the difficult, the simple and the complex. It has seen many ups and downs during its long march to where it stands today. But so steady, sturdy and sensible were the hands that the providence had placed it in, that it never fell or faltered, and kept moving onwards, in accordance with the ancient saying, *caraiveti, caraiveti* (चरैवेति, चरैवेति) – march on, march on.

Its very inception was, historically speaking, the re-enactment of a seventy-year-old play, on the stage set by the East India Company, in which two opposing sets of actors, the so-called Orientalists and Anglicists debated the type of education that the Indians should receive. Then, the Anglicists carried the day. In the new setting seventy years later, the opposing sets of actors were the so-called 'College wālās' and 'Gurukula wālās' debating almost the same old issue on the stage of the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Punjab – as to what kind of education should be imparted to our people. Unlike the previous occasion, this time, the supporters of indigenous education were not on the losing side. Thanks to their efforts, the time tested Gurukula system of education saw its revival in India after thousands of years.

## THE COLONIAL AIM

To understand the context and the process of the revival of the Gurukula system, it would be profitable to take a look into the past. A special characteristic of our educational system through the ages has been that the state never interfered or intervened in its functioning. The East India Company was the first to do so in the

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modern times, and even the Company did not plunge into it at once. It did so after over half a century in 1813, when its charter Act (of that year) stated in clear terms that... a sum of not less than one lakh rupees each year shall be set apart and applied to the revival and improvement of literature and... for the improvement of education and promotion of a knowledge of the sciences among the inhabitants of the British territories in India.[3]

The two warring factions, the Orientalists and the Anglicists debated for decades, the type and content of education to be imparted to Indians. The former wanted indigenous education through the medium of local languages, but the latter took the position that western arts and sciences be taught through the medium of English. In 1835, an end was put to debate once for all by a learned, clever and crafty man, Lord Macaulay, a member of the Governor-General's council. The 'Rome' spoke: the Government would go the Anglicists' way. The resolution, of March 7, 1835, stated clearly:

> The great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science among the natives of India, and that all the funds appropriated for the purpose of education would be best employed on English Education alone.[4]

Another very important feature of the policy was that education was to be given only to a few from the higher stratum of the society. This resulted in wide-spread illiteracy in the country.[5]

## SWAMI DAYANAND'S VISION

Swami Dayanand Saraswati (1824-1883), the founder of Arya Samaj was awfully disappointed with this sad state of affairs. However, as was his wont, he did not just sit back and lament at the unfortunate situation. He propounded for the benefit of his countrymen, a revolutionary scheme of indigenous education, which comprised teaching of the Vedas and later Vedic literature, classical Sanskrit, grammar via Aṣṭādhyāyī, Sciences, Mathematics, Geography, Geology, Astronomy, History, Politics, Medical Science, Crafts, Architecture, etc.[6] To one Nirbhey Ram of Farrukhabad (U.P.), Swamiji suggested that in his school at Farrukhabad he 'should allot teaching hours (to languages) like this: out of six hours, give 3 hours for Sanskrit, 2 for English and 1 for Urdu and Persian.'[7]

In Swamiji's opinion, education was to be free and compulsory, every child above the age of eight was to attend a school, and parents who did not comply were to be punished by the state. Every student, princely or poor, was to have the same kind of clothing, food, bedding and education, with a perfect equality among all. The students were to observe celibacy as long as they remained in the Gurukula. The teachers were to treat them like their own children.[8]

In his life-time, Swamiji opened a couple of *pāthashālās* (schools), which imparted education on the above lines. As he was awfully busy with the work of reform,

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renaissance and political awakening, he, however, could not open more *pāthashālās*. But after his sad demise, his mission flourished by leaps and bounds, as his followers opened hundreds of quality educational institutions throughout the country.

## THE FIRST EXPERIMENT

The first successful experiment in the field of education was made in Punjab. A group of Arya Samajists who assembled at Lahore after the demise of Swamiji to plan a suitable memorial, decided to set up an educational institution. As a result, the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic (D.A.V.) College was established at Lahore. In a short span of time, the college made huge progress and soon became one of the best colleges in the province.[9]

A section of the Arya Samajists led by Mahatma Munshiram (later Swami Shraddhanand), though happy that the experiment was a success, was not satisfied with the type of education being imparted. They found it not in adherence to Swamiji's teachings, as there was a more than desirable emphasis on western education. They argued that English, Sciences and other subjects were to be taught, but not at the cost of Vedic education. They were also not satisfied with the teaching of Sanskrit language and grammar. A powerful faction of the management led by Lala Lal Chand and Lala Hansraj was however, not ready to accommodate such views. The Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Punjab, however resolved in 1898 to open another institution - a Gurukula as desired by Mahatma Munshiram and his associates.

## GURUKULA KANGRI

To realise this dream, of setting up Modern India's first Gurukula, a sum of thirty thousand rupees was needed. Mahatma Munshiram accepted the challenge and took a vow to return home only after he had collected the amount. The sum was, in those days, quite large. But not for the Mahatma! With a begging bowl in hand, he moved from place to place, day and night, and collected forty thousand rupees in about nine months. That was Mahatma Munshiram![10]

Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Punjab lost no time in taking a decision to open the Gurukula. For the time being, the students were admitted to a small institution at Gujaranwala, as the new venture was yet to acquire a suitable piece of land. Mahatma Munshiram made an appeal and several persons came forward with offers, of land, which however were found unsuitable for the purpose. Mahatma Munshiram had pictured in his mind, a unique site for the institution, as described in *Yajurveda*:

*Upahvare girīṇāṁ saṅgame ca nadīnām. Dhiyā vipro'ajāyata.*[11]

Meaning: "In the lap of mountains where flow the streams to meet and join, there with the dawn of holy intelligence, the man of light is born."

One day his wish was fulfilled. A landlord, Ch. (Munshi) Aman Singh of Nazibabad (U.P.), offered to donate his village, Kangri to the Gurukula. Situated on the banks of the Ganga, far from the crowds, it was an ideal site. The land measured about 1200 *Bighā*.[12] Mahatmaji accepted the offer.

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Temporary arrangements were made to set up the Gurukula at the new site, and on March 1, 1902 the Gurukula was shifted from Gujranwala to Kangri. Mahatmaji's son Indra Vidyavachaspati, has given a lively account of the shifting:

> Around one dozen children arrived at Haridwar station by train from Punjab (March 1, 1902). We had accompanied our father (Mahatma Munshiram) from Gujranwala. Acharya Pt. Gangadutt along with several learned persons was at the station. We left the station in a procession led by my father and Pt. Gangadutt. Just behind them a gentleman named Totaram held a big photograph of Maharshi Dayanand. We followed them in two rows. As we came out of the station, we started reciting the eight hymns of prayer and continued till we reached Kankhal. Having passed through the market, we arrived at the Daksha temple. We still kept reciting the Vedic hymns. At that time Haridwar and Kankhal were chiefly dominated by the *pandās* (priests) and tourists. They were surprised to see the flags with the symbol of Om and open recitation of the Vedic hymns. They looked at us with amusement, as if we were aliens... We had heard in Gujranwala that a village named Kangri across the Ganges near Haridwar had been donated for opening Gurukula. We were being taken to that new place.[13]

There was no approach-road to Kangri village. The students reached there with great difficulty. As the sun was about to set, the boys took bath in the Ganga and offered their evening prayer (*sandhyā*). After that, the Gurukula was formally opened on March 2, 1902. The office was set up in a *kachchā* room with a thatched roof. The class rooms and living quarters were mere huts. There was a dense forest all around and wild animals often visited the site.

The first formal inaugural function of the Gurukula was held on March 21-24, 1902, and was attended by about 500 people. It was not a small number, keeping in mind various factors like Kangri being a small village, the limited presence of Arya Samaj in the area and that the institution was in its infancy. On the fourth day, the *Vedārambha Sanskār* (initiation into the study of Vedas) of forty-five *brahmachārīs* was held. Gurukula received three thousand rupees as donation on the occasion. Out of this amount, two thousand rupees were donated by Pandit Lekhram's wife.[14] By and by, more money came with which simple but elegant buildings were constructed.

***The Rules and Regulations***

The *Gurukula* was for boys only, but open to all castes, creeds, classes and communities, provided a student agreed to adhere to the following conditions:

(1) His *Vedārambha Sanskār* (initiation ceremony) should have been performed according to 'Vedic rites';

(2) He should neither be less than six nor more than eight years of age, at the time of admission;

(3) He must be physically and mentally sound;

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(4) The parents or guardians should give a guarantee that they would neither marry nor betroth the boy till he was at least twenty-five years of age; and

(5) The parents should sign a form of agreement to not withdraw the boy from Gurukula till the completion of his course and to pay ten rupees per month towards the maintenance charges regularly.[15]

Every student was required to follow the following rules of conduct:

(1) Students were not allowed to visit a town or a village, except under special circumstances, such as a serious illness or a death in the family or serious illness of himself;

(2) They were permitted to correspond with their parents/guardians not oftener than once a month; all letters were to be received and sent through the Governor[16];

(3) No one but the parent/guardian or a near-relative was allowed to visit the student and that, too, only once in a month. Such meetings could take place under the directions of the Governor and the visitor was allowed to stay usually for not more than two days; and

(4) The students going out of the campus even for a walk or for some other purpose were to be accompanied by a teacher or superintendent.[17]

***Perfect Equality***

The students were not discriminated on account of their social, financial or any other standing: 'The sons of wealthy and poor parents were treated alike in respect of food, clothing, lodging or studies.'[18] C.F. Andrews is all praise for Mahatmaji for making such arrangements: It goes to the credit of Munshiram, he says, that long before Gokhale introduced the Elementary Education Bill in the Vice-regal Council, he matured his plans for giving free education to the sons of the soil, irrespective of birth, colour, caste or creed.[19]

The students adhered to the following schedule:

At 4 a.m. the senior and at 4.30, the junior *brahmachārīs* and members of the supervising staff rise in response to the *Ashram* bell; fold up their beddings and proceed to the Ganga and enjoy the morning bath. Most of the students and superintendents know swimming. Competitions are accordingly held with great zest and enjoyment. In winters, they go to the bathrooms, built at a cost of over two thousand rupees donated by certain philanthropists. Before bathing all the *brahmachārīs* take physical exercise and undergo a drill under the direction of the superintendents. Between 5.30 and 6 they commence their daily *yajñas viz:* (i) *Sandhyā* – Prayer and Meditation and (ii) *Agnihotra.* After this, they are given fresh milk and regular classes are held from 6.15 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., when the morning meal is served consisting of a liberal supply of bread, pulses, vegetables and fruits. Rice-pudding and *Halwā* are served occasionally. The diet is strictly vegetarian. Till 2.45 boys take rest though the senior students utilise the interval in reading books from the library. Again the teaching goes on till 5.15 p.m. The

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boys then engage themselves in sports. After dinner, the boys proceed to their dormitories and revise their lessons. At 9 p.m. the students go to bed.[20]

A Managing Committee ran the affairs of the Gurukula. It consisted of the President, a Secretary, a Treasurer and fourteen other members, three of whom were teachers. In academic matters the teachers had full say.[21]

***On the Road to Progress***

The Gurukula was started with only the primary classes, and a little later, two other classes were added, up to the 7th standard. Sanskrit language, grammar and Vedic literature were the main subjects. After 1906, three more classes were added. In the higher classes general subjects such as Geography, Mathematics, History, Economics, Arithmetic, Science, Agriculture and English were also taught. The medium of instruction was Hindi, and text books authored by highly qualified teachers were available in Hindi even for the sciences. It is noteworthy that most of the Hindi terms coined in the Gurukula in those days for scientific terms are still in use.

***The Mahavidyalaya (college classes)***

There were ten classes in the school (Vidyalaya) and English was taught from class VI onwards. In 1908, the Mahavidyalaya (the college) was started. It was planned on the pattern of other colleges, with the only difference being in the content of study. The emphasis in the Mahavidyalaya was, as expected, on Sanskrit and Vedic education. Other subjects like Social Sciences, Sciences, Mathematics and languages including English, were also taught. The Mahavidyalaya was fortunate to have highly competent staff members like Mahatma Munshiram (Governor), Kashinath Shastri (Sanskrit Literature and Philosophy), Shiv Shankar Kavyatirth (Veda), Ramdev (M.R.A.S., English Literature), Balakrishna (History and Economics), Tarachand Gajra (English), Tulsi Ram (Western Philosophy), Yogendra Nath (Indian Philosophy), Lakshman Das (Mathematics), V.G. Sathe (Chemistry), M.C. Sinha (M.Sc., Botany) and Pandit Mahesh Charan (Agriculture).[22]

With this, a new era in education was ushered in, instilling in the youth, creative ideas and thoughts.

## THE GURUKULA VISHWAVIDYALAYA

In 1911, the Mahavidyalaya was given the status of a Vishwavidyalaya (University).[23] It functioned independently and framed its own rules and regulations for admissions, examinations and other matters. The first convocation of the Vishwavidyalaya was held in 1912. Thousands of people witnessed the great academic event. Harishchandra and Indra, sons of Mahatmaji, the first graduates of the Vishwavidyalaya were awarded the degree of *Vidyalankar*.[24] The emotionally charged atmosphere moved many to tears. Mahatma Munshiram in his convocation address said,

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By the grace of God, you have accomplished the first phase of your life as celibates, successfully. There was hardly any person who was not pleased to watch the revival of a long-lost tradition. You are the first graduates of the Gurukula. All eyes are set on you and you have a greater responsibility to discharge as alumni of the Gurukula.[25]

The Vishwavidyalaya steadily grew in popularity. In 1912, there were 100 students on its rolls. The number increased with each passing year. To accommodate them, a new building was needed, which came up before long. Separate hostels were made for junior and senior boys. Besides that, quarters were also constructed for the teachers and other employees. As a result, the Gurukula campus developed into a 'family township'.[26]

Gurukula brought out a large number of text books and other literature on the Vedas and Ancient Indian History and Culture. These books became very popular. The old journal, *Saddharm Prachārak* which Mahatma Munshiram had started now came out from the Gurukula. Mahatmaji also donated to the Gurukula, along with his other properties, the Saddharm Press, where this magazine was published.[27]

***The Dark Clouds***

Thanks to the untiring efforts of Mahatma Munshiram, his associates and dedicated teachers, the Gurukula made great progress in different fields. It was the first major experiment of its kind in the history of modern national education. The Gurukula produced many patriots and responsible citizens. Small wonder then, the Government looked at the Gurukula with suspicion. Their Intelligence Department made damaging reports on its teachers and students. An excerpt from a detailed Intelligence Report makes very interesting reading:

(1) The scheme of studies at the Gurukula does not include any History other than Indian History until the tenth class, and specifications are made in prescribing stories from medieval Indian History for the fourth and fifth classes that are 'calculated to stimulate patriotic and righteous feelings'.

(2) The isolation of the *brahmachārīs* from the world is by no means complete, as the Gurukula boasts of. There is a good library that receives all magazines and high class periodicals published in India. The perusal by the *brahmachārīs* of such insidious and objectionable publications as the *Modern Review* cannot but induce feelings of disaffection in them. Even those newspapers and periodicals of the present day that are conducted by men known as moderate leaders have as a rule little but misrepresentation and destructive criticism for all the actions of Government, and the *brahmachārīs* cannot fail to be imbued with the same spirit.

(3) The Gurukula has also a debating club in which the discussion of political subjects is not apparently prohibited. Such an institution, without anyone to correct misapprehensions or intentional misstatements made in course of debates, is bound to exercise an influence for bad.

(4) The Gurukula management lays great stress on the constant and wholesome influence of the superintendents and teachers over the *chelas*. In the Quinquennial Report for 1902-1907 on the Kangri Gurukula, Lala Munshiram

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remarked that 'given desirable teachers wonderful results can be produced'. Among certain qualities which he enumerated that could be impressed by example as well as by precept was 'burning love for country'. One of the advantages which he claimed for the *brahmachārīs* of Gurukula was this that '*he possessed much more general information which had the additional advantage of being sound and desirable*'. Even supposing that the management be genuinely anxious to prevent the students from cultivating strong anti-British feelings, they must be handicapped by their want of control, owing to most of the staff being honorary workers. Mr. Offorde, the District Magistrate of Bijnor, who visited the Gurukula in April 1909, was not favourably impressed with the staff. With reference to one of the most important members, Mr. Ramdeo, who also edits the *Vedic Magazine*, he remarked as follows: 'He is full of wind and has an undesirable influence in the place. A Bengali with atrocious manners, nothing he says comes from his heart. His influence over the older men is nil, but he must be doing harm there all the same'. Nothing is definitely known to the discredit of any member of the staff, except that one Satwalekar, who held for some time the post of drawing master, and painted a picture of Dayanand for the Gurukula, was implicated in the Kolhapur bomb conspiracy case. A warrant was issued for his arrest in 1908 and he absconded to avoid its execution. He was eventually arrested of the charge against him.

(5) There is little doubt that, intentionally or unintentionally, the Gurukula is training a band of political *sannyāsīs*, whose mission will be a menace to the welfare of the State.[28]

For the government, this was too much. Mahatma Munshiram met the Viceroy, the Lieutenant-Governor of U.P., and other officials and somehow convinced them that reports were false. As a result, the immediate threat to the Gurukula was avoided.

***An Experiment, Most Interesting***

Though there were many obstacles and impediments placed in Mahatmaji's way by some disgruntled elements in the Sabha as well as in the Vishwavidyalaya, he, by the dint of his ability and moral excellence, steered clear of everything. The Gurukula made tremendous progress, and its fame reached England. *The New Statesman*, a leading newspaper from England, wrote on June 20, 1914:

> More famous than the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College, the Haridwar Gurukula is perhaps the most interesting experiment in the field of education... From the Indian viewpoint, the most important contribution is the annihilation of caste here. Its 300 students represent all the castes from the highest to the lowest. All live alike. The caste discrimination is very deep-rooted in India. It is very difficult to uproot it even with the Western education and ideals. But in the Gurukula, its roots have been cut with great success... Devoid of spirituality and morality, the foolish British officials get panicked and confused as to what these people are doing. They have become habitual of sensing sedition there.[29]

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Along with Gurukula, the fame of Mahatma Munshiram also spread far and wide. Ramsay MacDonald, who later became the Prime Minister of England, saw Jesus Christ and St. Peter in him. Said he:

> The modern artists, who want to make a statue of Jesus Christ can keep him (Mahatma Munshiram) in front of them, and a painter of the medieval personages, can portray St. Peter by seeing him.[30]

Nearer home, Mahatma Gandhi also held him and the Gurukula in high esteem.

## AFTER INDEPENDENCE

After Independence, the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Punjab faced a dilemma. The Gurukula had not taken any grant from the British Government, but the issue had to be considered afresh with an Indian Government in place. Secondly, the Gurukula degrees were not recognised by the Central and State governments. So the Gurukula students could not get a job or pursue further education elsewhere. After taking a serious stock of the whole situation, the Arya Vidya Sabha and Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Punjab jointly passed a resolution to the effect that a new registration be obtained under the Government of India Registration of Societies Act, 1860 in the name of Gurukula Kangri Vishwavidyalaya and get it recognised by the University Grants Commission (UGC). Serious efforts were made at different levels for this purpose. Eventually, the University Grants Commission granted Deemed-to-be University status to Gurukula Kangri Vishwavidyalaya on June 19, 1962. Since then, the Gurukula Kangri Vishwavidyalaya has continued to make a significant contribution to the cause of education and nation-building, as desired by its founder Mahatma Munshiram (Swami Shraddhanand).[31]

Both Gurukula Kangri and D.A.V. College Lahore were serious attempts made by the Arya Samajists to 'conserve the ancient Indian learning along with the knowledge western sciences'. No historian can fail to assign a prominent place to these two institutions while writing the history of education in India.

Acknowledgement: The authors are grateful to Prof. K.C. Yadav for his guidance and help towards the paper.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Gurukula literally means a 'family of preceptors' where a *Brahmachārī* resides and reads, being always in company with the *guru* for not less than 16 years.
2. Kangri is the name of a village near Haridwar. Munshi Aman Singh of Nazibabad donated his village land for establishing Gurukula in 1901. The Gurukula is named after this village. However, this land was flood-prone and so the Gurukula was shifted to nearby land but it retains its old name (Gurukula Kangri). The land donated by Aman Singh is known as *Puṇya Bhūmi*.
3. See for details *Journal of Haryana Studies*, vol. 1, No. 2, 1969, p. 7.

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4. Quoted in Michael Edwards, 1969, *Raj: The Story of British India*, Pan Books Publishing, London, p. 137.
5. The rate of illiteracy in 1880 was 891/1000 among males and 994/1000 among females. See *The Census of India*, 1891, p. 217.
6. See Swami Dayanand, *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter 3, where a comprehensive blueprint of education is given.
7. Bhagavaddatta (ed.), 1981, *Rishi Dayanand Saraswati ke Patra aur Vijñāpan*, part II, Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Bahalgarh, Sonepat, p. 502.
8. See Swami Dayanand, *op. cit.*, chapter 3.
9. First a school was opened in 1886. Three years later (1889), the college classes were started. See Lajpat Rai, Lala, *The Arya Samaj*, D.A.V. College Managing Committee Publishing Department, New Delhi, pp. 129-130.
10. G.A. Chandavarkar, 1913, in his article *The Gurukula Academy at Kangri, The Indian Review*, pp. 642-49.
11. *Yajurveda*, 26.15
    उपह्वरे गिरीणां सङ्गमे च नदीनाम्। धिया विप्रोऽअजायत॥
12. Satyadev Vidyalankar, 1995, *Swami Shraddhanand*, Gurukula Kangri, Haridwar, p. 300.
13. Indra Vidyavachaspati, 2005, *Mere Pitā*, Satyarth Prakashan, Kurukshetra, p. 48.
14. See Satyadev, *op.cit.*, p. 304.
15. G.A. Chandavarkar, *op.cit.*, p. 646.
16. The chief authority of the Gurukula was called Acharya or Governor.
17. G.A. Chandavarkar, *op.cit.*, pp. 646-647.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 647
19. *Ibid.*, p. 643.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 646.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 644-645.
22. Indra Vidyavachaspati, 1957, *Arya Samaj kā Itihāsa*, part II, Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, New Delhi, p. 26.
23. Satyadev Vedalankar, *op.cit.*, p. 307.
24. The Gurukula awarded the degrees of Vidyālankār, Vedālankār, Āyurvedālankār, Vidyāvāchaspati and Vidyāmārtand which were corresponding to B.A., B.A. with Vedas, Graduation in Ayurveda, M.A. and Ph.D. respectively.
25. Satyadev Vedalankar, *op.cit.*, pp. 307-9.
26. *Ibid.*
27. *Ibid.*, p. 294.
28. C.E.W. Sands, 1910, *The Arya Samaj in the United Provinces*, Govt. Press, Allahabad, pp. 33-35.
29. See Satyadev, *op.cit.*, pp. 349-50.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 375.
31. See Jaidev Vedalankar, 2002, *Gurukula Kangri Vishwavidyalaya Haridwar kā sau varshon kā Itihāsa*, Bharati Vidya Prakashan, Delhi.

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# SECTION IV
# The Vedas: A Modern Rediscovery

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# CHAPTER 20

# The Vedas: An Overview

*Ram Prakash*

Rishi Dayanand Saraswati, at the instance of his Guru, Swami Virjanand Dandi, launched an epoch-making crusade against the *anārṣa granthas* that had gained currency as scriptures and had misled the Indian society into an abyss of ignorance, superstition and all-round degeneration. He reasserted the real meaning and teachings of the Vedas, and in doing so, he agreed neither with Sāyaṇa nor with the foreign scholars, in the matter of interpretation. For him, the Vedas were the word of God, the treasure house of all knowledge, and the supreme and self-evident authority.

## THE VEDAS

### *The Four Vedas*

Over the centuries, people with vested interests tried to promote several *granthas* as the Veda. The credit goes to Swami Dayanand Saraswati for re-establishing in the modern times, the fact that only the four Samhitās are the Veda, and the Brāhmaṇa granthas or any other book cannot be accorded that status. From the beginning of the creation till date and from Brahmā up to us, all the true knowledge that is heard, is called *Śruti*.[1]

The Vedas cover many subjects but the four principal ones are: *vijñāna* (science), *karma* (action), *upāsanā* (devotion) and *jñāna* (knowledge). Usually Ṛg, Yaju, Sāma and Atharva are enumerated in this order. Rishi Dayanand has explained and justified this order in Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā.[2]

The Ṛgveda has 10 mandalas, 1,028 sūktas and 10,552 mantras. There are 1,975 mantras in the 40 chapters of the Yajurveda. The Sāmaveda contains 1,873 mantras in its 3 *ārchikas*. In the 20 *kāṇḍas* and 731 sūktas of the Atharvaveda, there are 5,977 mantras. Thus the number totals to 20,377 mantras in all the four Vedas.

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***The Authenticity of the Vedas***

The authenticity of the Vedas is accepted by various authorities. Maharshi Kaṇāda considers the Vedas as self-sufficiently authoritative.[3] Kapila says in Sāmkhya Darśana, "The Vedas are self-sufficiently authoritative being the creation of God."[4] Manusmriti also acknowledges the authority of the Vedas. Manu declares that "the Veda is the root of all *dharma*"[5] and opines that "One who blasphemes the Veda is an atheist."[6] He further says: "If there is a difference between the Smriti and the Veda, only the Veda is final."[7] According to *Atri Smriti,* there is no treatise greater than the Veda.[8] In Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, Yājñavalakya tells his wife Maitreyī: "O Maitreyī! Ṛgveda, Yajurveda, Sāmaveda and Atharvaveda are born of God effortlessly like the breath."[9]

The Sikh scripture, Guru Granth Sahib, also sings the glory of the Vedas, recognising that the Vedas are revealed by God.[10] These are four in number and the revelation took place in the conscience of the four rishis.[11] Further, it asserts that the study of the Vedas is better than that of innumerous books.[12] The Vedas are not false, but false is one who does not ponder over them.[13]

Swami Dayanand, the only Vedic Rishi or seer of his times, states in Satyarth Prakash, "Of these (books other than the Vedas) too, those which appear to be contradictory to the Vedas, should be rejected; for the Vedas being created by God, are infallible and self-sufficiently authoritative, that is to say, the Vedas are their own authority."[14]

***Revelation and the Rishis***

The Veda is the eternal knowledge of God. In the beginning of the creation, God revealed the Ṛgveda, Yajurveda, Sāmaveda and Atharvaveda in the conscience of the four sages, Agni, Vāyu, Āditya and Aṅgira respectively. "As God is all-powerful and all-pervading, He stands in no need of mouth and other vocal organs to impart the Vedic knowledge to souls; for letters are pronounced with the mouth and tongue to inform persons different from one-self, but not to inform one's own self. There is a great deal of business of thinking and pronunciation of words going on in the mind without the mouth and the tongue."[15]

The Vedas themselves proclaim revelation. "Ṛgveda, Yajurveda, Sāmaveda and Atharvaveda are the creation of the universally worshipped Almighty God."[16] "We respectfully venerate the Vedas of the creator of the universe."[17]

Some people opine that the rishis (seers) composed (created) the mantras. They are highly mistaken. The seers did not compose the mantras. They only realised and expounded the meanings of the Vedic verses. In Nirukta, Yāskāchārya defines "rishi as one who 'sees' or understands the meaning of the mantra."[18] Thus according to Vedic dictionary, a rishi cannot be described as one who composed the Veda mantras. Traditionally for the sake of remembrance, the name of a rishi came to be identified with the mantra which he realised. But that does not make him the composer. Many mantras are attributed to more than one seer. Almost one hundred rishis are identified with just one sūkta of the Ṛgveda.[19] Does that mean that for this one sūkta, a hundred rishis sat together to compose it - even when, for the same mantra different rishis belong to different periods? It does not stand to reason that they simultaneously

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composed a mantra. The rishis interpreted the mantras, therefore understandably, for the same mantra there were various rishis at different times.

### *No History in the Vedas*

The Vedas have no history of any country, race or times. No doubt, words such as Viśvāmitra, Vasiṣṭha, Urvaśi do find mention in the Vedas, and consequently, western writers have made an attempt to impose history on the Vedas. This has been an obsession with certain Indian writers too. The fact, however, is that in due course of time, many things and individuals have been named after the words occurring in the Vedas. But to interpolate history into the Vedas on their basis is not valid. It would be as absurd as somebody called Ramchandra today claiming that Daśaratha named his son after him millions of years ago, and that the Rāmāyaṇa is only about him!

As a matter of fact, these words in the Vedas are neither proper nouns nor descriptive of individuals. They instead connote certain attributes because *tara* (तर, comparative degree) and *tama* (तम, superlative degree) can be suffixed only with adjectives, and the adjectives occur often in the Vedas such as *kaṇvatama* (कण्वतम)[20] and *indratama* (इन्द्रतम).[21] Had *Kaṇva* and *Indra* been proper nouns, *tama* (superlative degree) could not have been suffixed.

Some words have been used in different mantras with varying meanings. For example, take the word *Vasiṣṭha*, which occurs a number of times in the Vedas:

*Śatam yā bheṣajāni te sahasram saṅgatāni ca.*
*Śreṣṭhamāsrāvabheṣajam vasiṣṭham roganāśanam.*[22]

"Out of the hundreds and thousands of medicines available, the best and the curative one is *chulānā*." Here *Vasiṣṭha* does not denote an individual, rather is the name of a herb. In the 54th mantra of the 13th chapter of the Yajurveda, *Vasiṣṭha* means *prāṇa* (breath). In Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa[23] too, this word has been used in this sense: *prāṇo vai vasiṣṭha ṛṣiḥ* meaning breath is *Vasiṣṭha* rishi. In a mantra of the Ṛgveda,[24] *Vasiṣṭha* indicates water.

Many words denote different things in different contexts. A word having different meanings is the embellishment of language. These words are *yaugika* and not *laukika* or *rurhi*.[25] They have contextual meanings. Their real sense is understood by considering their root meaning. Such words cannot be treated as an evidence of history in the Vedas. Even Max Müller who holds the opposite view about the Vedas had to admit that "Names are to be found in the Vedas as it were in a still fluid state. They never appear as appellatives, nor yet as proper nouns."[26]

### *The Source of All True Knowledge*

The fundamentals of all true knowledge viz., the science of language, social sciences, philosophy, mathematics, zoology, chemistry, physics, astronomy, geology, agriculture, sculpture etc., are enshrined in the Vedas. In other words, the seeds of all branches of learning are available in the Vedas. The Vedas, however, do not have any inner contradictions or anything against the laws of nature. There is neither anything unscientific in the Vedas nor do any mantras deal with magic or superstitions.

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Bloomfield and the like, in the course of interpreting the Vedas have unnecessarily and repeatedly used the word *charm* to prove that the Atharvaveda is a treatise of magic and superstition.[27] The view is erroneous. As a matter of fact, it contains Ayurvedic, scientific and psychological treatments for physical, mental and spiritual ailments. Many mantras mention various medicines and herbs which destroy the germs. It is patently wrong to call them magic.[28]

***The Vedas and Monotheism***

The Vedas unequivocally preach monotheism. Several Veda mantras[29] emphasise that God is one. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśa are not considered three different *devatās* but three names of one and the same God. Consequently, *agni, vāyu, sūrya, savitā, varuṇa, indra* and many others are indicative not of any material entity always but stand for the various attributes of God.[30] Swami Dayanand quotes a statement from the Nirukta, *mahābhāgyād devatāyā eka ātmā bahudhā stūyate* (महाभाग्याद् देवताया एक आत्मा बहुधा स्तूयते) to support his argument, thereby refuting the views of the western as well as the eastern scholars that the essence of Vedas is in offering salutations to the deities.[31] There are no stories of any *devatā* or human beings in the Vedas. The names of Paurāṇic deities have, no doubt, been taken from the Vedas. But the Vedas do not endorse their worship. In fact "Vedas, the sacred books of the primitive Aryans, are the purest record of the highest form of monotheism possible to conscience."[32]

***The Vedas and Idol Worship***

Idol worship has been prevalent in India for almost three thousand years. It does not, however, find sanction in the Vedic Śāstras. As God is formless and omnipresent, an idol cannot represent Him. The Yajurveda[33] clearly forbids idolatry: *Na tasya pratimā'asti yasya nāma mahadyaśaḥ*. As God is *aja ekapāt*[34] and *akāyam*[35] i.e., God neither takes birth nor assumes any form, and there cannot be his incarnation.

The *bhaktikāl* saints like Kabir as well as many other writers vehemently opposed idol worship, but they could not give it a Vedic basis from the scriptures. After centuries, it was left only to Virjanand Dandi[36] and Swami Dayanand to reject idol worship on the basis of the Vedas and other classics.[37]

***The Vedas and Traitavāda***

Three entities *Brahmā* (God), *jīva* (souls) and *prakṛti* (material cause of the universe) are eternal. *Brahmā* is known by many names such as *Īśvara, Parmeśvara, Parmātmā* and so on. The properties of God have been defined in the second principle of the Arya Samaj. Quintessentially, God is the Spirit Supreme. He neither takes birth nor dies. He is changeless, unlimited and without a form. God is one. Souls are countless. God is omnipresent; Soul is confined to specific place. God is beyond *karma*. The *Jīvas* (individual souls) perform various acts and are rewarded accordingly. God requites *jīvas* as per their doings. God is omniscient, the Soul is not. God is *Saccidānanda Svarūpa* i.e., *sat* (self-existent), *cit* (intelligent) and *ānanda* (bliss personified). *Jīva* is existent and intelligent, but devoid of *ānanda*. *Prakṛti* is only existent. With ambitions for happiness,

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souls worship and praise God who is bliss incarnate. By worshipping lifeless images devoid of bliss (i.e., idol worship), bliss cannot be attained. Neither is God ever in doubt, nor are souls His part nor do spirits ever become God. The merger of God and soul (sprit) is not possible. The scientific principle of *traitvāda* has been explained beautifully in the Ṛgveda.[38]

*Dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāyā samānam vṛkṣam pari ṣasvajāte.*
*Tayoranyaḥ pippalam svādvattyanaśnannanyo abhi cākaśīti.*

Meaning: Atop a tree, sit two birds, of which one eats the fruits as the other watches. Of *jīva* and *Brahma*, the *jīva* fully enjoys the fruits of *sin* and *puṇya* and on the other end is God who partakes of nothing but spreads his light everywhere. God and souls are different from material cause of the universe but all three are eternal.[39]

### *The Vedas and Cow Slaughter*

A major falsehood spread about the Vedas is that cow-slaughter has a Vedic sanction. On the contrary, a number of Vedic mantras mention the cow as अघ्न्या (*aghnyā*) i.e., not worthy of being killed.[40] The Yajurveda[41] clearly ordains: "Don't kill the cow." The Ṛgveda declares, "The cow is innocent, do not kill it."[42]

The Vedas enjoin the strictest punishment for the cow slaughterers. The Yajurveda favours 'capital punishment to the killer of the cow.'[43] The Atharvaveda enjoins that anyone who kills a cow should be shot dead.[44] The Ṛgveda recommends that one who kills a cow should be beheaded with an axe.[45] It must be pointed out that these mantras speak of the punishment to be given by the state and are not be taken as an excuse by anyone to take the law in their hands.

Rishi Dayanand started a major movement for the protection of the cow. He encouraged the establishment of societies for cow protection and *Gaushalas*. The first ever *Gaushala* in the country was established by him at Rewari, Haryana in 1878.

### *Yajña and Animal Sacrifice*

Some medieval scholars as well as the modern Indian and western scholars who subscribe to their thesis, have interpreted the 4th sūkta of the 9th kāṇḍa of the Atharvaveda and a few other Veda-mantras to justify animal sacrifice in the Yajña. Responsible for such erroneous interpretations are the commentators like Sāyaṇa and Mahīdhara. Due to their vested interests or erroneous understanding, these writers made baseless pronouncements regarding 'Animal sacrifice in Yajña' and that 'Aryans used to eat cow meat'. In the introduction of the commentary of this sūkta, Sāyaṇa writes, "Brahman kills a bull and makes an offering of its flesh to the various *devatās*." In this he has praised *ṛṣabha* and has described in detail, which organ is the favourite of which *devatā*. Further he has dwelt on the importance of sacrificing a bull for *havan* and has praised the consequent credit that accrues from it.[46] Some writers on the basis of a mantra from the Ṛgveda (10.85.13) endorse the killing of cows and bulls on the occasion of marriages. *The Vedic Age* mentions "the guests are entertained with the flesh of cows killed on the occasion (of marriage)."[47]

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There is no sanction of animal sacrifice in the Vedic Yajñas.[48] At numerous places, the Vedas term Yajña as *adhvara.*[49] *Dhvara* is a word for killing, and *adhvara* means its opposite. According to Nirukta, Yajña is synonymous with *adhvara.*[50] Yajña means *deva pūjā* (proper use of ingredients), *saṅgatikaraṇa* (mixing together) and *dāna* (donation). None of these words mean animal killing. Rishi Dayanand has clarified in Satyarth Prakash,

> Animal and human sacrifice is not indicated anywhere. Such blasphemy is found only in the books of Vāmamārgis... Wherever there are any indications, the Vāmamārgis have interfered... Sanctifying grain, body parts, rays and the earth is *Gau-medha.* When a person dies, his ritualistic last rites are known as *naramedha.*[51]

The ancient Aryans performed Yajña with grain, herbs, honey and ghee and not with meat. The proper cremation of a dead person is called *naramedha.* If we interpret the *Naramedha Yajña* as human sacrifice, then in *Pitryajña* and *Athithi* (guest) *Yajña,* offering will have to be made by killing the parents and guest respectively! Mahabharata says, "It is only the villains who have brought in the corruption of liquor and non-vegetarianism in Yajña. The Vedas have no where indicated it."[52]

***The Right to Vedic Learning***

Though the Vedas are meant for the entire humanity, there came a time when the Shudras and women were forbidden to study or to even hear the Vedas. *Strīśūdrau nādhīyātāmiti śruteḥ* (स्त्रीशूद्रौ नाधीयातामिति श्रुतेः) – was widely propagated. In Brahmsūtra Shankara Bhāshyam, it is stated that if a Shudra listens to the words of Vedas, his ears should be filled with glass and shellac.[53]

After centuries of blatant inhuman discrimination in the name of the Vedas, Rishi Dayanand paved the way for the emancipation of women and uplift of the Dalits. He ordained that every human being has the right to study the Vedas, as clearly stated in the Yajurveda.[54] The third principle of the Arya Samaj states that the study and dissemination of the Vedas is the prime duty of all Aryas. The knowledge of the Vedas is for the entire humanity, and is not the monopoly of any caste, creed or gender. Rishi Dayanand was the first person to publish the translation of the Vedas in Hindi, and the credit of making the Vedas accessible to one and all, goes to him.

## SWAMI DAYANAND AND THE VEDAS

Swami Dayanand Saraswati was a *mantra drasṭā,* a seer of the mantras and a great devotee. He had meditated upon and imbibed the great mysteries of the Vedas. With immense powers of intuition and concentration, an incomparable command over the Sanskrit language, and an in-depth study of Vedic literature, he was truly competent to interpret the Vedic hymns. During the early days of his translation of the Vedas, he recorded in *Bhrāntīnivāraṇa* on November 7, 1877: "As per my conviction and research,

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I consider about three thousand treatises from the Ṛgveda to *Pūrva Mīmānsā* as authentic." So vast and deep was the study of the seer! While most commentators had made the mistake of interpreting the Vedic words as *rurhi* or commonly understood, he gave the *yaugic* or contextual and root meanings of these words, thus making a great contribution in the field of Vedic knowledge. His commentary follows the Vedas, the Vedāṅgas, Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa etc. He states in Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā,

> Nothing inauthentic is written in this Vedic commentary... this commentary will follow the same lines as have been customary with the *rishis* and *munis* from Brahmā to Vyāsa. This Bhāshya will amend all those comments and commentaries which are contrary to the spirit of the Vedas and because of which discrepancies have crept in. My endeavour is to present the world, the true meaning of the Vedas so that the world becomes aware of what they stand for.[55]

Rishi Dayanand rejected the interpretations of Indian exegetes like Sāyaṇa and Mahīdhara as well as those of foreign commentators like Max Müller, Monier Williams and Wilson.

Several neutral scholars acknowledge the logic and Vedic knowledge of Swami Dayanand. Recognising "the remarkable attempt by Swami Dayanand... to establish the Veda as a living religious scripture," Sri Aurobindo writes:

> In the matter of Vedic interpretation, I am convinced that whatever may be the final complete interpretation, Dayanand will be honoured as the first discoverer of the right clues... He has found the keys of the doors that time had closed and rent asunder the seals of the imprisoned fountains.[56]

T.L. Vasvani opines, "Swami Dayanand Saraswati was in the first place, India's eye opener to the wisdom of the Vedas. I know none in modern India who was so great a scholar as the Swami."

Many reputed scholars, however, could not gather the courage to assist him in this great task. Rishi had to assign the work of editing the Hindi version to Bhimsen, Jwala Dutt and the like, whose skills and assistance were quite inadequate. Sāyaṇa had the patronage of a king and Max Müller was backed by the state. In contrast, there was just Dayanand and his God. No resources, not even a library. That with a few ordinary collaborators and despite numerous preoccupations, he could achieve so much, is awe inspiring.

### *The Influence of Rishi Dayanand*

Rishi Dayanand sent samples of his commentary to contemporary foreign scholars as well as some Pandits. It was not easy to challenge Max Müller and company. At that time, those with western education (like Raja Radhakant Dev, Devendranath Thakur, Swami Vivekanand etc.) and the organisations like Brahmo Samaj were full of praise for Max Müller and the like. With Dayanand's commendable endeavour, the thinking

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changed. The foreigners who were blowing the Vedas away with all their might failed in their nefarious efforts, and started adopting caution in their publications.

Max Müller who considered the Vedas fit only for the uncivilised, after reading Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, wrote a book entitled 'India: What Can it Teach Us?', to correct his position. In it, Max Müller admits:

> I maintain then that for a study of man, or, if you like, for a study of Aryan humanity, there is nothing in the world equal in importance with the Veda. I maintain that to everybody who cares for himself, for his ancestors, for his history, or for his intellectual development, a study of Vedic literature is indispensible.[57]

Max Müller and Monier Williams followed Rishi Dayanand's enunciations of the Vedas, regularly. Monier Williams was present at Bombay on March 5, 1876 for the Swami's lecture and the two had a dialogue too. Max Müller could not personally meet Rishi Dayanand in his life time but was so deeply influenced by his scholarship and activities that he wanted to write his biography. He also invited the Rishi to England. The same Max Müller who had spent the greater part of his life and almost a lakh of rupees to prepare the version of Sāyaṇa's Ṛgveda Bhāshya, now declared Dayanand's Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā as the ultimate volume and wrote: "We may divide the whole of Sanskrit literature, beginning with the Ṛgveda and ending with Dayanand's Introduction to his edition of the Ṛgveda, his by no means uninteresting Ṛgveda-bhūmikā, into two great periods."[58] Max Müller also wrote to the President of Arya Samaj, London on July 7, 1888: "I fully sympathise with the Arya Samaj movement. Arya Samajis should not remain content with what Swamiji did but should continue with the work which he left unfinished."[59]

Like Max Müller, several other scholars had also begun to subscribe to Rishi's views on the Vedas. N.B. Pavgee opines: "The Veda is the fountain-head of knowledge, the prime source of inspiration, nay the grand repository of Divine wisdom and even eternal truth."[60] In another work of his, he concedes, "The Vedas contain many things not yet known to anybody, as they form a mine of inexhaustible literary wealth that has still remained unexplored."[61] Quoting Rudolph Steiner, the Belgian Nobel Laureate Maeterlinck records, "Only the gaze of the clairvoyant directed upon the mysteries of the past, may reveal the unuttered wisdom which lies hidden behind these writings (the Vedas)."[62] Morris Philip admits that "We are justified, therefore, in concluding that higher and purer conceptions of the Vedic Aryans were the results of a primitive Divine Revelation."[63]

## THE VEDAS AND SCIENCE

Rishi Dayanand believes that there is scientific knowledge in the Vedas. In this context Max Müller writes, "To him not only was everything contained in the Vedas perfect truth, but he went a step further, and by the most incredible interpretations succeeded

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in persuading himself and others that everything worth knowing, even the most recent inventions of modern science, were alluded to in the Vedas."[64]

Several modern scholars hold similar views about the Vedas. P.N. Gaur writes, "The Ṛgveda deals with the theorems and experiments, while the process of preparing the reagents and apparatus is recorded in the Yajurveda which is in fact, a laboratory guide."[65] Dr. Rele says, "Our present anatomical knowledge of the nervous system tallies so accurately with the literal description of the world given in the Ṛgveda that a question arises in the mind whether the Vedas are really religious books or are books on anatomy and physiology of the nervous system."[66] Sir William Jones says, "From the Vedas are deduced the practical arts of surgery, medicines, dancing, archery and architecture under which the system of mechanical art is included." Jacolliat writes, "Astonishing fact! The Hindu Revelation (the Vedas) is of all revelations the only one whose ideas are in perfect harmony with modern Science."[67]

To substantiate that there is scientific thinking in the Vedas, let us consider a few examples:

***Rotation and Revolution of the Earth***

The Yajurveda says,

*Āyam gauḥ pṛśnirakramīdasadan mātaram puraḥ. Pitaraṁ ca prayantsvaḥ.*[68]

This mantra states that the earth revolves round the sun. In the eighth chapter of Satyarth Prakash, Rishi Dayanand quoting this evidence from the Yajurveda, has written: "This hemisphere along with water goes on revolving round the sun in the sky. Therefore the earth revolves." Dayanand has translated *gau* (गौः) as the earth (जूमि), in accordance with Nirukta and Nighaṇṭu.[69]

*Gauriti pṛthivyā nāmadheyam yaddūram gatā bhavati, yaccāsyām bhūtāni gacchanti.*
*Gauriti pṛthivī nāmasu paṭhitam.*

Acharya Dvijendranath has translated this mantra as follows: "The earth revolves in the space. It revolves with its mother, water in its orbit. It moves round its father, the sun."[70] Thus both rotation and revolution of the earth are explained in this mantra.

The Atharvaveda also says, *Varṣeṇa bhūmiḥ pṛthivī vṛtāvṛtā* [71]
Meaning: In one year, the earth completes its revolution.

***The Sun holds the Earth***

The Ṛgveda says, *Sūro rathasya naptyaḥ*[72]

Here, the sun is called *sūra* (सूर) as it emits the universal light. The word *ratha* (रथ) is derived from the root *ranha* (रंह) and means 'to cause movement.' The planets are in motion and have therefore been termed *ratha* (रथ). The exact translation of planet is indeed *ratha* (रथ), because the word 'planet' is derived from the Latin world '*Plāneṭa*' which means 'wanderer.' Here *naptyaḥ* (नप्त्यः) means 'not allowed to fall.' Even Sāyaṇa concedes:

*Naptyaḥ na pātayitryaḥ yābhiryuktābhi ratho yāti na patati tādṛśī.*[73]

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Meaning: 'Those that do not allow it to fall are called *naptayaḥ* (नप्तयः).' Therefore *Sūro rathasya naptyaḥ* (सूरो रथस्य नप्त्यः) means that the sun does not allow the planets of the solar system to fall.

The Atharvaveda endorses this in the following words:

*Sūryyeṇottabhitā dyauḥ.* सूर्य्येणोत्तभिता द्यौः

How does the sun hold these planets? This has been answered in the Yajurveda:[74]

*Ā kṛṣṇena rajasā varttamāno niveśayannmṛtam matryam ca.*
*Hiraṇyayena savitā rathenā devo yāti bhuvanāni paśyan.*

It is clear from this mantra that the sun by its power of attraction keeps hold on the earth and other planets of the solar system.

Elsewhere, it has been said *Vṛṣabho dādhāra pṛthivīm*[75]

Meaning: The *vṛṣabha* bears the earth. One of the meanings of the word *vṛṣabha,* is the 'Bull'. Taking an irrelevant meaning, the *Paurāṇics* lent credence to the view that the earth rests on the horns of a bull. However, Yāska,[76] giving the meaning of *vṛṣabha,* has written *Vṛṣabhaḥ kasmāt varṣayitā apām – Vṛṣabha* is the one who causes rain. The sun turns the water into vapours and thereby into clouds. These clouds cause rain. Thus *vṛṣabha* here means 'the sun', and so this hymn also declares that the sun holds the earth.

***The Septenary Composition of Light***

Newton proved that the white light of the sun is composed of the rays of seven colours. The principle has been enunciated in the Ṛgveda,[77]

*Sapta tvā harito rathe vahanti deva sūrya. Śociṣkeśam vicakśaṇa.*

'O Lord *Sūrya*! Seven types of rays take your light to the planets.'

The next mantra is

*Ayukta sapta śundhyuvaḥ sūro rathasya naptyaḥ. Tābhiryāti svayukribhiḥ.*[78]

'The *sūrya* which keeps the planets from falling, integrates seven types of rays.'

The eighth mantra has the word *haritaḥ* (हरितः). It comes from the root *hṛ* (हृ) which means 'to take away.' Sunrays take away, water and liquids, and are hence termed *haritaḥ* (हरितः). Nighaṇṭu has described, *haritaḥ* as the horses of the sun.

*Harita ityādityāśvānam sanjñā harita āditya syeti.*[79]

*Aśva* (अश्व) is from the root *aśu,* and means 'the one who moves at great speed.' A horse is also known as *aśva.* But in the Vedas, *aśva* is used metaphorically for light, energy, heat etc. After all what is the speed of a poor horse! On the other hand, the speed of light is 1,86,000 miles per second. That is why Nighaṇṭu has described *haritaḥ* as the rays i.e., those which carry the sunlight with great speed.

The ninth hymn carries the word *śundhyuvaḥ* (शुन्ध्युवः), meaning the one that purifies. From this it is evident that the ancient Aryans were familiar with the scientific fact that the sunrays have the property of destroying pollution and purifying the atmosphere. As is now commonly known, we inhale oxygen and exhale carbon dioxide. The sunrays convert carbon dioxide and water in the presence of chlorophyll into carbohydrates. Thus through photosynthesis, the plants get their food and the air gets purified. This activity is not possible in the dark.

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These two mantras of the *Sūrya sūkta* (सूर्य सूक्त), thus explain that the sun, with a combination of seven types of rays, creates white light. Another hymn of the Ṛgveda states, *Amī ye sapta raśmayastatrā me nābhirātatā.*[80]
'Seven types of rays combine in me like nerves in the navel.'

The Atharvaveda[81] says, *Ava divastārayanti sapta sūryasya raśmayaḥ.*
Meaning: 'Seven rays of the sun make the day.' This basic fact is so prevalent in the Vedic literature that *Saptaraśmiḥ* (सप्तरश्मिः - the seven rays) have become symbolic of the sun. Yāskāchārya also declared - *Sapta ṛṣayaḥ raśmayaḥ āditye* (सप्त ऋषयः रश्मयः आदित्ये)

*Sapta ṛṣayaḥ* (सप्त ऋषयः) are the sunrays. The sun is also known as *Sahastraraśmiḥ* (सहस्ररश्मिः - of thousand rays). Therefore, *Sapta raśmayaḥ* (सप्त रश्मयः) indicates not seven rays but rays of seven colours. These have been described in Chāṇḍogyopaniṣad as: *Asau vā ādityaḥ piṅgala eṣa śukla eṣa nīla eṣa pīta eṣa lohitaḥ.*[82] Here, all the seven colours are not mentioned because blue, yellow and red are the primary colours. All the other colours are made only by their combination. As the true meaning of the above mentioned mantras was not understood, a Paurāṇic notion therefore became popular that the sun rides a chariot pulled by seven horses.

### *The Composition of Water*

Now let us take an example from the chemical sciences. Cavendish proved that two parts of hydrogen and one part of oxygen combine to make water. Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi,[83] himself a scholar of Chemistry and a learned grammarian, pointed out that the same fact has been stated in the following mantra of the Ṛgveda,[84]

*Mitram huve pūtadakṣam varuṇam ca riśādasam. Dhiyam ghṛtācīm sādhantā.*

This mantra describes the process or steps (*dhiyam*) whereby the well known liquid, water, can be formed by the combination of two other substances (*ghṛtācīm sādhantā*). The word *sādhantā* is in the dual number indicating that it is two elementary bodies which combine to form water... The words used to indicate those two substances are *mitra* and *varuṇa*, which indicate here, as the learned scholar has shown, oxygen and hydrogen respectively.

### *The Medical Sciences*

The medical sciences have also been mentioned in the Vedic literature.[85] Various germs have been considered the cause of several diseases. The classes of germs such as *yātudhān, kimidin* and *rākṣasas* are described in the Atharvaveda.[86] Certain other classes of germs are mentioned in the second mantra of the second *kāṇḍa* of the thirty-first sūkta of the Atharvaveda. The germs producing cholera, eczema etc., find a mention in the fourth mantra of the same sūkta. The fifth mantra mentions that these germs live in mountains, forests, medicines, animals and water, and enter our body with food and liquids. The Yajurveda[87] too mentions the fact that the germs enter the body with food and water. The Atharvaveda[88] records that the rays of the rising and setting sun kill the germs which thrive in darkness. *Bacillus Colli*, for example, breaks into two species in about twenty minutes. Thus if the conditions are favourable then in just eight hours, sixteen million germs can be born, and the total weight of the germs so produced in

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twenty four hours will be 14,000 pounds. But due to the heat of the sun and conditions unfavourable to their growth, the germs cannot multiply that fast.

***Mathematics in the Vedas***

Many references to mathematics are also to be found in Vedic literature. The Atharvaveda mentions the numerals in the following mantra:

*Na dvitīyo na tṛtīyaścaturtho nāpyucyate. Na pañcamo na ṣaṣṭhaḥ saptamo nāpyucyate.*
*Nāṣṭmo na navmo daśamo nāpyucyate. Sa eṣa eka ekavṛdeka eva.*[89]

This mantra says that God is one and not two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine or ten. Apart from counting, there is evidence of multiplication and addition also in the Vedas. The Yajurveda[90] describe multiples of 10 up to 10 (*dasa śankha*). Usually in other languages, big numbers are described only as multiples of thousand or hundred thousand. The Yajurveda[91] mentions the numbers formed by addition or subtraction of two and four. The Atharvaveda[92] make a mention of the circumferences of a triangle.

The seeds of all basic sciences are there in the Vedas. The Vedas are neither verses inspired by the fear of the objects of nature nor an affirmation of blind faith. The Vedas preach the eternal truths, and the seeker can unravel the truths and mysteries, through the path shown by ancient sages.

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10. ओंकार वेद निरमए। –राग रामकली महला 1 ओंकार शब्द 1
11. चारे दीवे चहु हथ दीए एका एकी वारी –बसन्त हिंडोल, महला 1, शब्द 1
    चारे वेद होए सच्चिआर –आसा दी वार महला 1 वार 13
12. असंख ग्रन्थ मुखि वेद पाठ। –जपुजी 17
13. वेद वखिआन करत साधुजन भागहीन समझत नहीं खलु। –टोडी महला 5, शब्द 26
    वेद कतेब कहहु मत झूठे, झूठा जो न विचारे। –राग प्रभाति कबीर जी शब्द 3
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# CHAPTER 21

# The Terminology of the Vedas and the European Scholars

*Guru Datta Vidyarthi*

## THE TERMINOLOGY[1]

The question of the origin, nature and eternity of *Shabda* – human articulate and inspired speech – has been a very important question in Sanskrit literature. The highly philosophical character of this question cannot be doubted, but the peculiar characteristic, which attracts the attention of every Sanskrit scholar, is the all-pervading nature of the influence it exerts on other departments of human knowledge. It is not only the *Nairuktikas* and the *Vaiyakaranis*, the grammarians, etymologists and philologists of ancient Sanskrit times, that take up this question; but even the acute and subtle philosopher – the last and the best Sanskrit metaphysician – the disciple of the learned Vyāsa – the founder of one of the six schools of philosophy – the religious aphorist Jaimini cannot isolate the treatment of his subject from the influence of this question. He runs in the very beginning of his Mimānsa (dissertation) into this question and assigns a very considerable part (proportionately) of his treatise to the elucidation of this question. It is not difficult for a reader of modern philology, well-versed in discussions on onomatopoeia and other artificial theories of human speech, to perceive the amount of wrangling which such questions give rise to. We have mentioned the position assigned to this question in Sanskrit literature not so much with a view to put an end to all this wrangling, which, perhaps, is unavoidable, but with a view to take up, in a brief way, another and a more practical question involved therein, *i.e.*, the question of the interpretation of Vedic terminology.

Up to this time all the plans that have been adopted for the interpretation of Vedic terminology have been based on some pre-conceived notions. The philosophy of the subject requires that these pre-conceived notions should be carefully examined,

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studied and pruned of the extraneous matter liable to introduce error, whereas new and more rational methods should be sought after and interposed – methods such as may throw further light upon the subject.

Briefly speaking, they are three in number, and may, for want of better denomination, be called the Mythological, Antiquarian and Contemporary methods.

***The Mythological Method***

This method interprets the Vedas as myths, as an embodiment of simple natural truths in the imaginative language of religious fiction, as a symbolic representation of the *actual* in the *ideal*, as an imbedding of primitive truth in the super-incumbent strata of non-essential show and ceremony. Now, in so far as this concretion of thought in mythological network goes, it assumes a comparatively rude and simple stage of human life and experience. From this basis of a primitive savage state it gradually evolves the ideas of God and religion, which no sooner done than mythic period ends. It further argues thus:- In the ruder stages of civilisation, when laws of nature are little known and very little understood, analogy plays a most important part in the performance of intellectual functions of man. The slightest semblance, or visage of semblance, is enough to justify the exercise of analogy. The most *palpable* of the forces of nature impress the human mind, in such a period of rude beginnings of human experience, by motions mainly. The wind blowing, the fire burning, a stone falling, or a fruit dropping, affects the senses essentially as moving. Now, throughout the range of conscious exertion of muscular power, *will* precedes motion, and since even the most grotesque experience of a savage in this world assumes this knowledge, it is no great stretch of intellectual power to argue that these natural forces also, to which the sensible motions are due, are endowed with the faculty of will. The personification of the forces of nature being thus affected, their deification soon follows. The overwhelming potency, the unobstructible might, and often the violence, with which, in the sight of a savage, the forces operate, strike him with terror, awe and reverence. A sense of his own weakness, humility and inferiority creeps over the savage mind, and, what was intellectually personified, becomes emotionally deified. According to this view, the Vedas, undoubtedly books of primitive times, consist of prayers from such an emotional character addressed to the forces of nature including wind and rain – prayers breathing passions of the savage for vengeance or for propitiation – or, in moments of poetic exaltation, hymns simply portraying the simple phenomena of nature in the personified language of mythology.

Whilst deductive psychology affords these data, right or wrong as they may be, comparative philology and comparative mythology considerably support these views. A comparison of the mythologies of various countries shows that the working of human intellect is analogous, that this process of mythification is not only everywhere universal, but coincident. The Scandinavian, Greek and Indian mythologies have no clear line of demarcation, save the accidental one of differentiation due to climatic effects. Comparative philology not only admits the universality and coincidence of these phenomena, but traces even phonetic identity in the linguistic garb with which these phenomena are clothed.

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The evidence from these three sources – *comparative philology, deductive psychology* and *comparative mythology* – is indeed very great; and we have stated the nature of this method and the evidence upon which its validity depends at much greater length than the short space at our disposal could allow us, so that, for fairness' sake at least, the value and merits of this method may not be under-rated.

The results of comparative philology and comparative mythology need not be denied. They are the starting points in our discussion, the assumed axioms in the present subject. The *causus belli*, the debatable land lies beyond them, in fact, below them. They are the facts – recognised matters of truth. How are they to be explained? And like explanations of all other things, here too, there may be alternative explanations, rival hypotheses, parallel theories to confront the same facts and phenomena. That mythologies of various countries are similar, may be explained as much on the hypothesis that laws of psychological development are everywhere the same, as on the hypothesis that they are all derived from a common parental system of mythology or religion. Phonetic similarities, apart from their doubtful and frequently whimsical character may analogously be traced to the operation of analogous organs and phonetic laws, or to a common parent language from which all the others are derived. Nor can these methods have any further claims to settle the dispute between these rival theories. As methods, they can only discover mythic or phonetic similarities or affinities, but cannot explain them. Even if we leave out of consideration the alternative character of the conclusions arrived at, the explanations possess, considered from the standpoint of inductive validity, a very low specific value. We seek the explanation not from a fact already known to exist – we only inferentially assume a fact to have existed, whilst we are at the same time assuming the validity of our inference. The assumed fact, from which the desired explanation is sought, is not inferred from any independent evidence, but is itself a link in the self returning series of concatenated facts. Further, the growth of mythology is deductively inferred from some psychological data. It might as easily have been inferred as a degenerate, crippled, and then stitched and glossed remnant of a purer and truer religion. An author has well spoken of the degeneracy of things including doctrines pre-eminently, if left alone. Nor is this fact in any way an obscure one to the student of the history of church dogmas and opinions. Who does not know of religious practices primarily designed to meet certain real wants, degenerating, after a lapse of time on the cessation of those wants, into mere ceremonies and customs which are regarded, not as accidents, but as essentials? Mythologies, as well as mythic practices, then, may arise either as products of human imagination working under subdued intellect and petrified reason, or, as an outgrowth of a distorted remnant of a purer and truer form of religion.

There is not one hypothesis in connection with this subject that has not a counter-hypothesis, not one theory whose claims are not met with by a rival theory. Independently of the vague character of these hypotheses – the philological and mythological ones – the uncertainty of the conclusions deduced from them cannot be lost sight of. Like the conclusions arrived at by Mr. Pococke in his 'India in Greece'[2] wherein he traces the origin of all Greek geographical names to Sanskrit Indian names, and whereby he infers the colonisation of Greece by the Indians, the conclusions

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arrived at according to the aforesaid hypothesis constitute one full chain of circular reasonings continually returning into themselves. Admitting the cognate relation that exists between the Greek and Sanskrit languages it must follow that Greek names of localities must bear a remote and far-fetched, as contrasted with a direct and *palpable*, identity to Indian names of localities. The colonisation of Greece by the Indians is not the just conclusion to be drawn from the specific topographical relations, which Mr. Pococke has traced, independently of the common origin of Greek and Sanskrit languages. The identity of Greek and Sanskrit stock is a general formula which cannot be any further proved by such specific connections. The fact of the identity of several systems of mythologies and languages also leads to a distinct general proposition – the uniformity of human nature. Beyond the value of this general proposition, the specific mythological and philological facts have no independent value. Their value is subsumed in the general proposition. These particular propositions; when right, *cannot add* to the value of the general proposition which they go to form, but, when wrong, they *can materially vitiate* the truth of the general proposition. A conclusion based upon the legitimacy of a *general* order of nature, or a *universal* law, can derive no real independent logical strength from the enumeration of particular instances of such order or law, all similar in kind. All the remarks that have been made above may in one sense be considered to bear upon the question of comparative mythology in general, as having no distinct individualised influence on the terminology of the Vedas. There is one other point, however, which comes directly into contact with the mythological theory as concerned with the terminology of the Vedas. Mythology, as already remarked, is the symbolisation of human thought in the concrete. The contrast, therefore, of mythology with the abstract is the widest and the most thoroughgoing.

Philosophy, as analysed by Herbert Spencer, has for its object the elucidation of *ultimate* truths or laws. These truths, in so far as ultimate, must be the *most general.* The wider the group of individual facts that a law covers, or the greater the distance of the ultimate law from the minute sub-laws covering a very limited and primary area, the more abstract and the less concrete does its expression become. Philosophy and mythology, therefore, stand contrasted – completely contrasted to one another in this respect. Philosophy is abstract, expressed in general terms and ultimate formula; mythology is concrete, expressed in gross material terms representing primary objects and phases of objects. Nothing, therefore, is so completely subversive of the value of the mythological method as the existence of philosophy and philosophic ideas in the Vedas. That the Vedas are books of philosophy and not of mythology must not be admitted merely because a well-known professor and scholar of Sanskrit acknowledges that the germ of human thought and reason lies in the Vedas, whereas, according to him, its culmination lies in the philosophy of Kant, but on other and more trustworthy bases and authorities. The growth of philosophy in Sanskrit literature is earlier than the growth of mythology. The Upanishads and the Darshanas, which are professedly books of philosophy and confessedly nearer to the Vedas, chronologically preceded, and not followed, the Puranas, the embodiment of mythological literature of India. It was philosophy that was evolved from the Vedas, and not mythology. In the history of Indian literature, at least, it is not mythology that gives birth to philosophy, but

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philosophy that precedes mythology. How far mythology may rise as an out-growth and a distorted remnant of a purer and truer form of religion or philosophy, might perhaps now have been rendered more evident. Now the six schools of philosophy are, all of them, based on the Vedas, and support themselves by direct quotations from the Vedas. Not only, then, has philosophy been evolved from the Vedas, but substantially drawn out and evolved or developed subsequently. There is one, and only one objection that can be raised against the above views. It is that the different portions of the Vedas belong to different epochs, for whilst some portions are mythological, others are decidedly philosophical. We would not here say what is already well-known, that, however, it may be, not one line of the Vedas is later than the Darshanas or the Upanishads, not to speak of the Puranas. Howsoever greatly wide apart may be the epochs assigned to the various portions of the Vedas, no stretch of artificial reasoning can make them coincide with the Pauranic period. Independently of these considerations, which are important however, the very assignment of different epochs to the Vedas proves the insufficiency and partial character of the mythological system. The truth of the mythological system lies in the isolations of the portions of the Vedas. It is not the Vedas as a whole that furnish an illustration of this method, but in part. But what reason have we to isolate these portions or to split up the homogeneous mass into two? Simply this, that they belong to two distinct epochs. Now the assertion that the portions belong to two distinct epochs, is itself grounded upon the insufficiency of the mythological method. If they could interpret the whole of the Vedas by the one mythological method, there could be no need of separating them. This, they could not, and therefore the isolation. The justification of the partial character of the mythological method depending upon the correctness of the assignment of the various epochs, such assignment has no authority save the insufficiency of the mythological method. Thus, then, is the partial character of the mythological method unconsciously regarded as self-sufficient. The first method, then, out of the three enumerated in the beginning of this subject, considered independently, proves insufficient; considered in conjunction with philology, fares no better; and lastly, fails in contrast with the philosophic character of the Vedas. We will now consider the second method.

***The Antiquarian or the Historical Method***

One of the most successful methods of unravelling ancient literary records is the antiquarian or the historical method. It consists in approximating, in so far as possible for the interpretation and explanation of the records in hand, to the books and general literature of the period to which it belongs. For the obvious reason that direct evidence is always to be preferred to second-hand information, this method is next in value to none, but to the direct evidence of the senses. Now, in so far as in historical research, where the study of the past epoch is concerned, one has inevitably to fall for information on the literature and historical record of the period with which he is concerned; an examination of the conditions, which render such evidence valid and a labour on it no unfruitful task, is essential to establish the canons of historical research. The veracity of our knowledge of past events depends upon two factors on this method; firstly, on the faithfulness of the records we obtain of the event or events of the period;

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and secondly, on the faithfulness of our interpretation of the records. We would forgo an analysis of the first factor as this factor is amenable, for the estimation of its evidence, to laws which do not come within the compass of our subject. The interpretation of the records is what directly concerns us.

The excellence of the historical or the antiquarian method lies in the fact that it renders our interpretation of past records less liable to error. And the reason may be thus explained. Language, like all other things that live or are of organised growth, is subject to constant variations, to variations, depending partly on the laws of development of phonetic organs, partly on external circumstances of fusion and introduction of foreign languages, and partly on the laws of the evolution of human thought itself. Owing to this and many other causes, all living languages are daily undergoing changes, which accumulate and appear after a sufficiently long interval to have created very different, though cognate, languages. Anything, thought or philosophic system that is invested with linguistic garb, therefore, requires for its correct interpretation that the laws which govern those linguistic variations and the variations of the sense of words should be carefully studied. Otherwise, our interpretation would suffer for misconception and anachronism. To take a concrete example, let us consider the case of the Roman Republic. In the time of the Roman Republic, when public press was unknown, news unheard of, locomotive engines undreamt, and other means that engender or facilitate the communication of indelible impression of human thought or reason, un-thought of, and when Forum was the only place of resort for all audience, and oratory had a totally different meaning from that of modern times, the Senate signified a different institution from what it now is; Republic or democracy of the people – the people then existing – was what would be to us something like oligarchy, though very different from it in many essential features. Now a reader studying the literature of the period corresponding to the Roman Republic would find his information of the period incommensurate with facts, if, on account of his being unguided in his studies, the words Democracy, Republic, and the like, were to call forth before his mind what they now signify. Such a knowledge would be inconsistent with itself, a medley of two epochs, and would be such as, on critical examination, would be termed sheer nonsense.

***The Contemporary Method***

The applications of this method in the domain of history are, beyond doubt, various and most important. But not the less important are its applications in the fixing of the dates, or the succession of periods, of the Puranas, the Darshanas, the Upanishads, Manu, the Ramayana, the Mahābhārata, and so on. Various professors have fruitlessly tried to fix dates of these writings by searching in them, in most cases in vain, for any well-established consistent historical facts. But far more important in the fixing of these dates is the knowledge of historical evolution of Sanskrit literature. The Sanskrit of the Puranas is so different from the Sanskrit of the Mahābhārata, and that of the Darshanas, which again is so different from that of the Upanishads, that a clear line of demarcation in each case is easily laid down. The one cannot be confounded with the other.

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It is a matter of great surprise and wonder that in the case of the Vedas the method, whose merits are so evident and obvious, and which is so well recognised in the domain of history, should not have been applied, or, so loosely and carelessly applied as to render modern interpretations of the Vedas by some very well-known professors of Sanskrit simply unintelligible and absurd.

In the case of the Vedas the learned professors of Sanskrit, whose versions of the Vedas are so extant, have all derived their inspirations from the commentaries on the Vedas by Mahidhara, Rāvana and Sāyana, writers of a period decidedly very much later than that of the Vedas, and only well coinciding with our own time. These writers themselves were as much ignorant of the terminology of the Vedas, as we are. Their interpretations of Vedic terms, according to their meanings extant in their own times, were as wrong as would be those of words like democracy in our studies concerning ancient Rome. Mahidhara and Sāyana fare in no way better than ourselves. It seems astonishing that in adopting the interpretation of the Vedas by Sāyana and Rāvana, our modern professors of Sanskrit should have forgotten the invaluable maxim that the nearer we approximate to the literature of the period to which the Vedas belong for their interpretation, the greater would be our chances of the interpretation, being more probable and more correct. According to the date assigned by these professors to the Vedas, their interpretation of the Vedas would be based on the literature of a period so heterogeneous to the time and spirit of the Vedas as to give rise to nothing but confusion and error.

To the view of any impartial reader, who has studied the investigations of Goldstucker on this point, the whole fabric of dates crumbles to dust, and the whole system of modern recognised chronology is easily upset. According to the best [and they are, as a matter of fact, the worst] authorities on the subject, no writings of date anterior to five or six thousand years before Christ seem to have existed. The whole world seems to have been circumscribed within 8,000 years. The whole region of the intellectual activity of man seems to have been focused in the 6,000 years before Christ.

Irrespective of these views let us come directly to the subject of the Vedas. The Shatapatha and the Nirukta are confessedly books of much anterior date to the commentaries of Sāyana, Rāvana and Mahidhara. We should rather resort to them and the Upanishads than to the times of Puranas, of Rāvana and of Mahidhara, for the interpretation of the Vedas.

The Upanishads inculcate monotheism. Where, in the Upanishads or the Shatapatha, do *Indra*, *Mitra*, and *Varuna* signify the deities and not the Deity? The Nirukta even lays down explicit rules on the terminology of the Vedas which are, as yet, quite unheeded by the modern professors.

The Niruktakāra, in the very beginning of his book, forcibly inculcates that the terms used in the Vedas are *yaugika* (possessing derived meaning) as contrasted with *rurhis* (terms having conventional, arbitrary or concrete meaning). We will, on some future occasion, quote at full length from the Nirukta, and render a better exposition of this doctrine. Here, however, we have simply said what the main assertion of the Nirukta is. This assertion is supported by the Mahābhāshya and other older books on the subject, including Sangraha.

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If the main line pursued in discussing the question of the terminology of the Vedas be correct, the conclusion we have arrived at leads to the following inquiry:

What is the opinion of ancient Vedic scholars on the subject? Are the authors of the Nirukta, the Nighantu, the Mahabhāshya, and the Sangraha, and other old commentators, at one with the modern commentators, *i.e.*, Rāvana, Sāyana, Mahidhara and others, who have, of late, followed the same line; or, are they at variance with the modern writers? That, if they differ, reliance must be placed upon old commentators; the preceding remarks would have made clear. Let us then examine the views of ancient writers on the subject.

Speaking broadly, then, three classes of words are used in the Sanskrit language; the *yaugika*, the *rurhi* and the *yoga-rurhi* words. A *yaugika* word is one that has a *derivative* meaning, that is, one that only signifies the meaning of its root together with the modifications effected by the affixes. In fact, the structural elements, out of which the word is compounded, afford the whole and the only clue to the true signification of the word. These being known, no other element is needed to complete its sense. Speaking in the language of modern logic, the word is all *connotation*, and by virtue of its connotation determines also its denotation. A *rurhi* word is the name of the definite concrete object, or answers to a definite concrete technical sense, not by virtue of any of its connotations but by virtue merely of an arbitrary principle. In the case of a *yaugika* word, we arrive at the name of an object by what may be called the process of generalisation. We see, taste, touch, smell and operate upon the object by the multifarious means man possesses of investigating properties of sensible objects; we compare the sensible impressions it yields with sensible impressions already retained in our minds and constituting our past knowledge; we detect similarities between the two, and thus get a *general* or a *generic* conception. To this generic conception we give an *appropriate* name by *synthetically* arriving at it from a *root*, a primitive idea or ideas. The word, therefore, thus ultimately formed, embodies the whole history of the intellectual activity of man. In the case of a *rurhi* word, the process is far different. We do not generalise. Nor is, therefore, any synthesis required there. We only roughly discriminate one object or class of objects from other objects, and *arbitrarily* place a phonetic *postmark* as it were, upon it. An individual, to roughly discriminate him from others, is arbitrarily called John, another, Jones; so an object is arbitrarily denominated *Khatva*, another *Mala*, and so on. Here, we only discriminatively specify the object we are naming, without coming into general contact with it.

A third class of words, *yoga-rurhi*, is one in which two words are synthetically combined into a compound, denoting a third object by virtue of the combination of these two words. Such words express any relation, or interaction of phenomena. The *kamala* stands, for instance, in the relation of the *born to mud*, the *bearer*; hence *kamala* is denominated as *pankaja*, (*panka*, the mud, and *ja* signifying to bear).

Now the author of the Mahābhashya maintains that the Vedic terminology is all *yaugika*. "*Nama cha dhatujamah Nirukte Vyakarane Shakatasya cha tokam.*

*Naigama rurhi bhavam hi susadhu.*"[3]

which means: Etymologically speaking, there are three classes of words, the *yaugika*, the *rurhi* and the *yoga-rurhi*. But the authors of the *Niruktas*, Yāska and others; and

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Shakatayana, among the grammarians, believe all the words to be derived from *dhātus*, that is, believe them to be *yaugikas* and *yoga-rurhis*, and Panini and others believe them to be *rurhis* also. But all the *Rishis* and *Munis*, ancient authors and commentators, without exception, regard Vedic terms to be *yaugikas* and *yoga-rurhis* only; and the *laukika* terms to be *rurhis* also.

The above is a clear and definite statement of the Mahābhāshya to the effect that the Vedic terms are all *yaugikas*. It is not difficult to prove by numerous and long quotations from Nirukta, Sangraha and other older writings, that all of them agree as to the nature of the Vedic terms.

Without going, then, into the details of this subject, it may be assumed, that the Vedic writers of older epochs do not agree with those of modern times.

It is a strange thing to find our modern professors of Sanskrit, well-versed philologists, and professed antiquarians so forcibly asserting the value of the "Antiquarian Method," and yet blundering at the very outset of this momentous question.

After the remarks we have made, it is not surprising to find that our modern scholars should think of finding mythological data of the Vedas, or, of having come across the facts of ruder bronze age, or *golden age*, in that book of barbaric hymns.

## THE EUROPEAN COMMENTATORS[4]

The first canon for the interpretation of Vedic terms, which is laid down by Yāska, the author of Nirukta, is that the Vedic terms are all *yaugika*. The fourth section of the first chapter of Nirukta opens with a discussion of this very subject. Yāska, Gargya, Shakatayana and all other Grammarians and Etymologists unanimously maintain that Vedic terms are all *yaugika*. But Yāska and Shakatayana also maintain that *rurhi* terms are also *yaugika* in as much as they were originally framed from the roots; whereas, Gargya maintains that only *rurhi* terms are not *yaugika*. The section concludes with a refutation of the opinion of Gargya, establishing it as true that all terms whether Vedic or *rurhi* are *yaugika*. It is on this authority of Nirukta that Patanjali expresses in his Mahābhāshya, the same opinion, and distinguishes the Vedic terms from *rurhi* terms by the designation of *naigama*.[5]

The sense of all this is, that all the *Rishis* and *Munis*, ancient authors and commentators without exception, regard all Vedic terms to be *yaugika*, whereas *laukika* terms are regarded by some as *rurhi* also.

This principle, the European scholars have entirely ignored, and hence have flooded their interpretations of the Vedas with forged or borrowed tales of mythology, with stories and anecdotes of historic or pre-historic personages. Thus, according to Dr. Muir,[6] the following historical personages are mentioned in the Rigveda, the *Rishis* Kanvas, in i.47.2; Gotamas, in i.61.16.; Gritsamadās, in ii.39.8 ; Bhrigavas, in iv.16.20; and Vrihaduktha, in x.54.6. But what is the truth! The words Kanva, and Gritsa only signify learned men in general[7]; the word Bhrigavah only signifies men of intellect.[8] The word Gotama signifies one who praises; and Vrihaduktha is simply one whose *ukthas*, or

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knowledge of natural properties of objects is *vrihat* or complete. It is clear, then, that if this principle is once ignored, one is easily landed into anecdotes of historical or pre-historic personages. The same might be said of Max Müller discovering the story of *Shunah-shepa* in the Rigveda. Shepa, which means 'contact,'[9] (शेपः शपते स्पृशति कर्म्मणो), being suffixed to शुनः or श्वन् which means knowledge, (श्वा श्वसतेः शवतेर्वा गतिकर्म्मणः स्यात्) means one who has come into contact with knowledge *i.e.,* a learned person. It shall appear, in the progress of this article, how *mantra* after *mantra* is misinterpreted by simply falsifying this law of *Nirukta.*

To an unprejudiced mind, the correctness of this law will never be doubtful. For, independently of the authority of *Nirukta,* the very antiquity of the Vedas is a clear proof of its words being *yaugika.* And even Professor Max Müller, in his mythological moods, is compelled to confess, at least concerning certain portions of the Vedas, that their words are *yaugika.* Says he, "But there is a charm in these primitive strains discoverable in no other class of poetry. Every word retains something of its radical meaning, every epithet tells, every thought, in spite of the most intricate and abrupt expressions, is, if we once disentangle it, true, correct, and complete."[10]

Further again says Max Müller, "Names... are to be found in the Veda as it were in a still fluid state. They next appear as *appellatives* not yet as *proper* names; they are organic, not yet broken or smoothed down."[11]

Can there be anything clearer than this? The terms occurring in the Vedas are *yaugika,* because "they never appear as appellatives, nor yet as proper names," and because "every word retains something of its radical meaning." It is strange to find that the self-same Max Müller, who has perceived the *yaugika* character of words in some *mantras* of the Vedas, should deny the same characteristic in other portions of the Vedas. Having said that words are *yaugika* in these primitive strains the Vedas, he proceeds to say, "But this is not the case with all the poems of the Veda. It would be tedious to translate many specimens of what I consider the poetry of the secondary age, the *Mantra* period. These songs are generally intended for sacrificial purposes, they are loaded with technicalities, their imagery is sometimes more brilliant, but always less perspicuous, and many thoughts and expressions are clearly borrowed from earlier hymns."[12]

This he calls the *Mantra* period. The 'primitive strains' belong to what is called the *Chhandas* period. He describes the characteristics of the *Chhandas* period, as distinguished from the *Mantra* period, that has been above described, thus; "There is no very deep wisdom in their teaching, their laws are simple, their poetry shows no very high flights of fancy, and their religion might be told in a few words. But what there is of their language, poetry, and religion has a charm which no other period of Indian literature possesses: it is spontaneous, original, and truthful."[13]

Professor Max Müller quotes Rigveda, VII.77, as a specimen hymn of the *Chhandas* period. Says he, "This hymn addressed to Dawn is a fair specimen of the original simple poetry of the Veda. It has no reference to any special sacrifice, it contains no technical expressions, it can hardly be called a hymn, in our sense of the word. It is simply a poem expressing, without any effort, without any display of far-

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fetched thought or brilliant imagery, the feelings of a man who has watched the approach of the dawn with mingled delight and awe, and who was moved to give utterance to what he felt, in measured language."[14]

From these quotations it will be clear that Professor Max Müller regards different portions of the Vedas belonging to different periods. There are some earlier portions, (according to Max Müller's highly accurate calculations, the very exactness and infallibility of which Goldstucker bears ample testimony to) which he calls as belonging to the *Chhandas* period. The word *Chhandas*, in *laukika* Sanskrit, means spontaneity. Hence he regards *Chhandas* period to be the one, the hymns of which period only teach common things, are free from the flight of fancy, and are the spontaneous utterances of a simple (foolish) mind. The *Mantra* period (2,900 years older) is full of technicalities and descriptions of elaborate ceremonies. Now we ask what proof has Max Müller given to prove that the different portions of the Vedas belong to different periods. His proofs are only two. *Firstly*, the ill-conceived, confused idea of the difference between *Chhandas* and *Mantra*; and *secondly*, the different phases of thought represented by the two portions. We will consider each of these reasons in detail.

Says Yāska–

मन्त्रा मननात्। छन्दांसि छादनात्। स्तोमः स्तवनात्। यजुर्यजतेः। साम सम्मितमृचा।।[15]

which means that there is no difference in the meaning of *Mantra* and *Chhandas*. The Veda is called the *Mantra*, as through it one learns the true knowledge of all existences. The Veda is also called the *Chhandas* as it removes all *ignorance*, and brings one under the protection of true knowledge and happiness. Or, more explicitly still, we read in Shatapatha.

छन्दांसि वै देवा वयोनाधाश्छन्दोभिर्हीदं सर्वं वयुनं नद्धम्।[16]

"The *mantras* are called *Chhandas* for a knowledge of all human conduct is bound up with them. It is through them that we learn all righteous conduct." The *yaugika* sense of the words will also lead to the same conclusion. *Mantra* may be derived from the root *man*, to think, or *matri*, to reveal the secret knowledge. Panini thus derives the word *Chhandas*: चन्देरादेश्च छः[17] *Chhandas* is derived from the root *chadi* to delight or illumine. *Chhandas* is that, the knowledge of which produces all delight, or which illumines everything, *i.e.*, reveals its true nature.

The second reason of Max Müller, for assigning different periods to different portions of the Vedas, is that there are two different phases of thought discoverable in the Vedas. The one is the truthful and simple phase of thought which corresponds to his *Chhandas* period. The other is the elaborate and technical phase of thought that corresponds to his *mantra* period. But what proof has Max Müller to show that the hymns of his secondary period are full of elaborate and technical thought? Evidently this, that he interprets them thus. If his interpretations were proved to be wrong, his distinction of the two periods will also fall to the ground. Now, why does he interpret the hymns of the *mantra* period thus? Evidently, because on the authority of Sāyana and Mahidhara, he takes the words of those hymns to signify technicalities, sacrifices, and artificial objects and ceremonies, or in other words, he takes these words not in their

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*yaugika*, but in their *rurhi* sense. It is clear, then, that if Max Müller had kept in view the canon of interpretation given in Nirukta, that all Vedic words are *yaugika*, he would not have fallen into the fallacious anachronism of assigning different periods to different parts of the Vedas.

But there is another prejudice which is cherished by many scholars evidently under the impression of its being a well-recognised scientific doctrine. It is that in the ruder stages of civilisation, when laws of nature are little known and but very little understood, when mankind has not enough of the experience of the world, strict methods of correct reasoning are very seldom observed. On the other hand, analogy plays a most important part in the performance of intellectual functions of man... It is, therefore, more agreeable for these scholars to believe that the Vedas, no doubt books of primitive times, are records of the mythological lore of the ancient Aryans. And since, even according to the confessions of Max Müller, higher truths of philosophy and monotheism are to be found here and there in the Vedas, it has become difficult to reconcile the mythological interpretations of the main part of the Vedas with the philosophical portions. Says Max Müller, "I add only one more hymn, in which the idea of one God is expressed with such power and decision, that it will make us hesitate before we deny to the Aryan nations an instinctive monotheism [Rig. x.121]."[18] It is, therefore, argued by some that the mythological portions are earlier than philosophical ones; for, the primitive faith, as already indicated is always mythology.

The fundamental error of this supposition lies in regarding a contingent conclusion as a necessary one; for, although mythology may be the result of barbarous intellect and analogical reasoning, it is not necessarily always so. It may even grow up as a degenerate, deformed and petrified remnant of a purer and truer religion. The history of religious practices, primarily designed to meet certain real wants, degenerating, after a lapse of time, on the cessation of those wants, into mere ceremonies and customs, is an ample testimony of the truth of the above remarks. Had the European scholars never come across the mythological commentaries of Sāyana and Mahidhara, or the *puranic* literature of post-Vedic (nay anti-Vedic) period, it would have been impossible for them, from the mere grounds of comparative mythology or Sanskrit philology, to alight on such interpretations of the Vedas as are at present current among them. May it not be, that the whole mythological fabric of the *puranas*, later as they are, was raised long after the vitality of true Vedic philosophy had departed from their words in the sight of the ignorant pedants? Indeed, when one considers that the *Upanishads* inculcate that philosophical monotheism, the parallel of which does not exist in the world – a monotheism that can only be conceived after a full conviction in the uniformity of nature, – and that they, together with the philosophical *darshanas*, all preceded the *puranas*; when one considers all this, one can hardly resist the conclusion that, at least in India, mythology rose as a rotten remnant of the old philosophical living religion of the Vedas. When through the *ignorance* of men, the *yaugika* meanings of the Vedic words were forgotten, and proper names interpreted instead, there grew up a morbid mythology, the curse of modern idolatrous India. That mythology may thus arise on account of the decay of the primitive meaning of old words, even Professor

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Max Müller admits, when speaking of the degeneration of truth into mythology by a process, he styles '*dialectic growth and decay*,' or dialectic life of religion. He says:

"It is well known that ancient languages are particularly rich in synonyms, or, to speak more correctly, that in them the same object is called by many names – is, in fact, *polyonymous*. While in modern languages most objects have one name only, we find in ancient Sanskrit, in ancient Greek and Arabic, a large choice of words for the same object. This is perfectly natural. Each name could express one side only of whatever had to be named, and, not satisfied with one partial name, the early framers of language produced one name after the other, and after a time retained those which seemed most useful for special purposes. Thus the sky might be called not only the brilliant, but the dark, the covering, the thundering, the rain-giving. This is the polynomy of language, and it is what we are accustomed to call polytheism in religion."[19]

Even, in the face of these facts, European scholars are so very reluctant to leave their pre-conceived notions that, as an example of the same influence, Fredrick Pincott writes to me from England:

"You are right in saying that the commentators, now so much admired, had very little, if any, better means of knowledge on Vedic Terminology that we have at present. And you are certainly right in treating the Puranas as very modern productions; but you are wrong in deducing India's mythological notions from such recent works. The Rigveda itself, undoubtedly the oldest book which India possesses, abounds in mythological matter."

Does "you are certainly right," and "you are wrong" amount to any proof of the Vedas abounding in mythology? But further he says, "After the great shock which the spread of Buddhism gave to the old Indian form of faith, the Brahmans began to make their faith seriously philosophical in the *Darshanas*. Of course, many bold philosophical speculations are found in the *Upanishats*, and even in the *Sanhitas*; but it was at the time of the *Darshanas* that the religion was placed on a really philosophical basis."

Nothing shows so great a disrespect towards the history of another nation as the above. One is indeed wonder struck at the way in which European scholars mistrust Indian chronology, and force their hypothetical guess work and conjecture before the world as a sound historical statement of facts. Who, that has impartially studied the *Darshana* literature, does not know that the *darshanas* existed centuries before even the first word of Buddhism was uttered in India? Jaimini, Vyāsa and Patanjali had gone by, Gautama, Kanada and Kapila were buried in the folds of oblivion when Buddhism sprang up in the darkness of *ignorance*. Even the great Shankara, who waged a manly war against Buddhism or Jainism, preached nearly 2,200 years ago. Now this Shankara is a commentator on Vyāsa Sutrās, and was preceded by Gaudapāda and other Achāryas in his work. Generations upon generations had passed away after the time of Vyāsa when Shankara was born. Further, there is no event so certain in Indian History as Mahābhārata, which took place about 4,900 years ago. The *darshanas*, therefore, existed at least 4,900 years ago. There is a strong objection against the admission of these facts by European scholars, and that objection is the Bible. For, if these dates be true, what will become of the account of creation as given in the Bible? It seems, besides, that European scholars, on the whole, are unfit to comprehend that there could be any

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disinterested literature in the past. It is easier for them to comprehend that political or religious revolution or controversies should give rise to new literature through necessity. Hence the explanation of Mr. Pincott, "The old Brahmans were superstitious, dogmatic believers in the revelation of the Vedas. When Buddhism spread like wild fire, they thought of shielding their religion by mighty arguments and hence produced the *darshana* literature." This assumption so charmingly connects heterogeneous events together that although historically false, it is worth being believed in for the sake of its ingenious explanatory power.

## A FEW EXAMPLES OF INTERPRETATIONS[20]

To return to the subject. Yāska lays down a canon for the interpretation of Vedic terms. It is that the Vedic terms are *yaugika*. Mahābhāshya repeats the same. We have seen how this law is set aside and ignored by the European scholars in the interpretations of the Vedas, whence have arisen serious mistakes in their translations of the Vedas. ...Dr. Muir, falling in the same mistake interprets general terms as proper nouns; and how Max Müller also led by the same error, wrongly divides the Vedas into two parts; the *Chhandas* and *Mantras*. We have also seen how due to the *ignorance* of the same law, *Mantras* upon *Mantras* have been interpreted as mythological in meaning, whereas some few *Mantras* could only be interpreted philosophically, thus giving rise to the question of reconciling philosophy with mythology. To further illustrate the importance of the proposition, that all Vedic terms are *yaugika*, I herewith subjoin the true translation of the 4th *Mantra* of the 50th Sukta of 1st Mandal of Rigveda with my comments thereon and the translation of the same by Monier Williams for comparison. Surya, as a *yaugika* word, means both the sun and the Divinity. Monier Williams takes it to represent the sun only. Other terms will become explicit in the course of exposition. The *Mantra* runs as follows:-

तरणिर्विश्वदर्शतो ज्योतिष्कृदसि सूर्य। विश्वमा भासि रोचनम्।।

The subject is the gorgeous wonders of the solar and the electric worlds. A grand problem is here propounded in this *Mantra*. Who is here that is not struck with the multiplicity of objects and appearances? Who that has not lost thought itself in contemplation of the infinite varieties that inhabit even our own planet? Even the varieties of plant life have not yet been counted. The number of animal and plant species together with the vast number of mineral compounds may truly be called infinite. But why confine ourselves to this earth alone. Who has counted the host of heavens and the infinity of stars, the innumerable number of worlds yet made and still remaining to be made? What mortal eye can measure and scan the depths of space? Light travels at the rate of 180,000 miles per second. There are stars from which rays of light have started on their journey ever since the day of creation, hundreds of millions of years ago, the rays have sped on and on with the unearthly velocity of 180,000 miles per second through space, and have only now penetrated into the atmosphere of our earth. Imagine the infinite depth of space with which we are on all sides surrounded. Are we not struck with variety and diversity in every direction? Is not differentiation the universal formula? Whence have these manifold and different objects of the universe

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proceeded? How is it that the same Universal-Father-Spirit permeating in all and acting on all, produced these heterogeneous items of the universe? Where lies the cause of difference? A difference so striking and at once so beautiful! How can the same God acting upon the universe produce an earth here and a sun there, a planet here and a satellite there, an ocean here and a dry land there, nay a Swami here and an idiot there? The answer to this question is impressed in the very solar constitution. Scientific philosophers assure us that colour is not an intrinsic property of matter, as popular belief would have it. But it is an accident of matter. A red object appears red, not because it is essentially so, but because of an extraneous cause. Red and violet would appear equally black when placed in the dark. It is the magic of sunbeams which imparts to them this special influence, this chromatic beauty, this congenial coloration. In a lonely forest mid gloom and wilderness, a weary traveller who had betaken himself to the alluring shadow of a pompous tree, lay down to rest and there sank in deep slumber. He awoke and found himself enveloped in gloom and dismal darkness on all sides. No earthly object was *visible* on either side. A thick black firmament on high, so beclouded as to inspire with the conviction that the sun had never shone there, a heavy gloom on the right, a gloom on the left, a gloom before and a gloom behind. Thus laboured the traveller under the ghastly, frightful windspell of frozen darkness. Immediately, the heat-carrying rays of the sun struck upon the massive cloud, and as if by a magic touch, the frozen gloom began to melt, a heavy shower of rain fell down. It cleared the atmosphere of suspended dust particles; and in a twinkling of the eye, fled the moisture-laden sheet of darkness resigning its realm to awakened vision entire. The traveller turned his eyes in ecstatic wonder from one direction to the other, and beheld a *dirty gutter* flowing there, a crystalline pond reposing here, a green grass meadow more beautiful than velvet plain on one side, and a cluster of variegated fragrant flowers on the other. The feathery creation with peacock's train, and deer with slender legs, and chirping birds with plumage lent from Heaven, all, in fact all, darted into vision. Was there naught before the sun had shone? Had verdant forests, rich with luxuriant vegetation, and filled with the music of birds, all grown in a moment? Where lay the crystalline waters? Where the blue canopy, where the fragrant flower? Had they been transported there by some magical power in a twinkling of the eye from dark dim distant region of chaos? No! they did not spring up in a moment. They were already there. But the sunbeams had not shed their lustre on them. It required the magic of the lustrous sun to shine, before scenes of exquisite beauty could dart into vision. It required the luminous rays of the resplendent orb to shed their influence, before the eyes could roll in the beautiful, charming, harmonious, reposeful and refreshing scenes of fragrant green. Yes, thus, even thus, is this sublimely attractive Universe, रोचनं विश्वं illuminated by a sun सूर्य आभासि, the Sun that knows no setting, the Sun that caused our planets and the solar orb to appear ज्योतिष्कृद्, the Sun that evolves the panorama of this grand creation, विश्वदर्शत the eternal Sun ever existing through eternity in perpetual action for the good of all. He sheds the rays of His Wisdom all around; the deeply thirsty, parching and blast dried atoms of matter drink, to satiation, from the ever flowing, ever gushing, ever-illuminating rays of Divine wisdom, their appropriate elements and essences of phenomenal existence and panoramic display. Thus is this

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Universe sustained. One central Sun producing infinity of colours. One central Divinity, producing infinity of worlds and objects. Compare with this Monier Williams' translation[21]:

"With speed, beyond the ken of mortals, thou, O Sun,
Dost ever travel on, conspicuous to all.
Thou dost create the light, and with it dost illume
The universe entire;"

We have shown why we regard *Chhandas* and *Mantra* as synonymous. We have also seen how Max Müller distinguishes between *Chhandas* and *Mantra*, regarding the latter as belonging to the secondary age, as loaded with technicalities, and as being less perspicuous than the former. He points out its chief character to be that "these songs are generally intended for sacrificial purposes." Concerning this *Mantra* period, he says, "One specimen may suffice, a hymn describing the sacrifice of the horse with the full detail of a superstitious ceremonial."[22]

We shall therefore quote the 162nd Sukta of Rigveda, as it is the specimen hymn of Max Müller, with his translation, and show how, due to a defective knowledge of Vedic literature and to the rejection of the principle that Vedic terms are all *yaugika*, Professor Max Müller translates a purely scientific hymn, distinguishable in no characteristics from the *Chhandas* of the Vedas, as representative of an *artificial*, *cumbersome* and *highly superstitious* ritual or ceremonial.

To our thinking, Müller's interpretation is so very incongruous, unintelligible, and superficial, that were the interpretation even regarded as *possible*, it could never be conceived as the description of an *actual* ceremonial. And now to the hymn. The first *mantra* runs thus:

मा नो मित्रो वरुणो अर्यमायुरिन्द्र ऋभुक्षा मरुतः परि ख्यन्।
यद्वाजिनो देवजातस्य सप्तेः प्रवक्ष्यामो विदथे वीर्याणि।।[23]

Max Müller translates it, "May Mitra, Varuna, Aryaman, Ayu, Indra, the Lord of Ribhus, and the Maruts not rebuke us because we shall proclaim at the sacrifice the virtues of the swift horse sprung from the gods."[24]

That the above interpretation may be regarded as real or as true, let Professor Max Müller prove that Aryans of the Vedic times entertained the superstition that at least one swift horse had sprung from the gods, also that the gods Mitra, Varuna, Aryaman, Ayu, Indra, the Lord of Ribhus and the Maruts, did not like to hear the virtues of the swift horse proclaimed at the sacrifice, for if otherwise, they would have no reason to rebuke the poet. Not one of these positions it is ever possible to entertain with validity. Even the most diseased conception of a savage shrinks from such a superstition as the "swift horse sprung from the gods." It is also in vain to refer for the verification of this position to the *ashwamedha* of the so called *Puranas*. The whole truth is that this mythology of *ashwamedha* arose in the same way in which originates Max Müller's translation. It originates from an *ignorance* of the dialectic laws of the Vedas, when words having a *yaugika* sense are taken for proper nouns, and an imaginary mythology started.

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To take, for instance, the *mantra* quoted above. Max Müller is evidently under the impression that *Mitra* is the 'god of the day', *Varuna*, is 'the god of the investing sky', Vayu or Ayu is the 'god of the wind', Indra the 'god of the watery atmosphere', Ribhus, 'the celestial artists,' and *Maruts* are the 'storm gods.' But why these gods? Because he ignores the *yaugika* sense of these words and takes them as proper nouns. Literally speaking, *mitra* means a friend; *Varuna*, a man of noble qualities; *aryama*, a judge or an administrator of justice; *ayu*, a learned man; *indra*, a governor; *ribhuksha*, a wise man; *marutah*, those who practically observe the laws of seasons. The word *ashwa* which occurs in the *mantra* does not mean 'horse' only, but it also means the group of three forces, heat, electricity and magnetism. It, in fact, means anything that can carry soon through a distance. Hence writes Swami Dayanand in the beginning of this Sukta,

अथाऽश्वस्य विद्युद्रूपेण व्याप्तस्याग्नेश्च विद्यामाह।।[25]

"This Sukta is an exposition of *ashva vidya* which means the science of training horses and the science of heat which pervades everywhere in the shape of electricity." That 'ashwa' means heat will be clear from the following quotations:

अश्वं न त्वा वारवन्तं वन्दध्या अग्निं नमोभिः।।[26]

The words *ashvam agnim* show that *ashwa* means *agni* or Heat And further:

वृषो अग्निः समिध्यतेऽश्वो न देववाहनः। तं हविष्मन्त ईळते।।[27]

which means *agni*, the *ashwa*, carries, like an animal of conveyance, the learned who thus recognise its distance-carrying properties. Or further,

वृषोऽ अग्निः। अश्वो ह वा एष भूत्वा देवेभ्यो यज्ञं वहति।।[28]

The above quotations are deemed sufficient to show both meanings of *ashwa* above indicated.

Professor Max Müller translates the "*devajata*" of the *mantra* as "sprung from the gods." This is again wrong, for he again takes *deva* in its popular *laukika* sense, god; whereas *devajata* means "with brilliant qualities manifested, or evoked to work by learned men": the word *deva* meaning both brilliant qualities and learned men. Again, Max Müller translates "*virya*" merely into virtues, instead of "power-generating virtues." The true meaning of the *mantra*, therefore is:

"We will describe the power-generating virtues of the energetic horses endowed with brilliant properties, or the virtues of the vigorous force of heat which learned or scientific men can evoke to work for purposes of appliances (not sacrifice). Let not philanthropes, noble men, judges, learned men, rulers, wise men and practical mechanics ever disregard these properties."

With this compare Max Müller's translation:

"May Mitra, Varuna, Aryaman, Ayu, Indra, the lord of Ribhus and the Maruts not rebuke us, because we shall proclaim at the sacrifice the virtues of the swift horse sprung from the gods."

We come now to the second *mantra* which runs thus:

यन्निर्णिजा रेक्णसा प्रावृतस्य रातिं गृभीतां मुखतो नयन्ति।
सुप्राङ्जो मेम्यद्विश्वरूप इन्द्रापूष्णोः प्रियमप्येति पाथः।।[29]

Max Müller translates it thus:

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"When they lead before the horse, which is decked with pure gold ornaments, the offering, firmly grasped, the spotted goat bleats while walking onwards; it goes the path beloved by Indra and Pūshan."

Here again there is no sense in the passage. The bleating of the goat has no connection with the leading of the offering before the horse, nor any with its walking onward. Nor is the path of Indra and Pūshan in any way defined. In fact, it is very clear that there is no definite specific relation between the first *mantra* and this, according to Müller's translation, unless a far-fetched connection be forced by the imagination bent to discover or invent some curious inconceivable mythology. And now to the application of the principle that all Vedic terms are *yaugika*. Max Müller translates *reknasas* into gold ornaments, whereas it only means wealth.[30] *Rati* which signifies the mere act of giving is converted into an 'offering;' *vishvarupa* which only means one 'having an idea of all forms' is converted into 'spotted'; *aja*, which means 'a man once born in wisdom, *being never born again*,' is converted into a 'goat'; *memyai*, from root *mi* to injure, is given to mean 'bleating'; *suprang*, which means from root *prachh* to question, 'one who is able enough to put questions elegantly,' is translated as 'walking onward,' *Pāthah* which only means drink or food, is translated into 'path'; and lastly, *indra* and *pushan*, instead of meaning the governing people and the strong are again made to signify two deities with their proper names 'Indra' and 'Pūshan'. Concerning the word *Pāthah*, writes Yāska.

पाथोऽन्तरिक्षम्। उदकमपि पाथ उच्यते, पानात्। अन्नमपि पाथ उच्यते, पानादेव।।[31]

*Mukhato nayanti*, which means, 'they bring out of the organ of speech, or they explain or preach,' is translated by Max Müller into 'they lead before'.

It is thus clear that, in this one *mantra* alone, there are *nine* words that have been wrongly translated by Max Müller, and all is due to this that the *yaugika* sense of the words has been ignored, the *rurhi* or the *laukika* sense being everywhere forced in the translation. The translation of the *mantra*, according to the sense of the words we have given, will be–

"They who preach that only wealth earned by righteous means should be appropriated and spent, and those born in wisdom, who are well versed in questioning others elegantly, in the science of forms, and in correcting the unwise, these and such alone drink the potion of strength and of power to govern."

The connection of this *mantra* with the foregoing is that the *ashwa vidya*, spoken of in the first *mantra*, should be practiced only by those who are possessed of righteous means, are wise, and have the capacity to govern and control.

We come now to the *mantra*.

एष च्छागः पुरो अश्वेन वाजिना पूष्णो भागो नीयते विश्वदेव्यः।
अभिप्रियं यत्पुरोळाशमर्वता त्वष्टेदेनं सौश्रवसाय जिन्वति।।[32]

Max Müller translates it thus:

"This goat, destined for all the gods, is led first with the quick horse, as Pūshan's share; for Tvashtri himself raises to glory this pleasant offering which is brought with the horse."

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Here, again, we find the same artificial stretch of imagination which is the characteristic of this translation. How can the goat be 'destined for all the gods,' and at the same time be '*Pūshan's share*' alone? Here Max Müller gives a reason for the goat being led first as Pūshan's share; the reason is that Tvashtri himself raises to glory this pleasant offering.' Now who is this Tvashtri, and how is he related to Pūshan? How does Tvashtri himself raise to glory this pleasant offering? All these are questions left to be answered by the blank imagination of the reader. Such a translation can only do one service. It is that of making fools of the Vedic *rishis* whom Max Müller supposes to be the authors of the Vedas.

The word *vishwadevyas*, which Max Müller translates as 'destined for all the gods,' can never grammatically mean so. The utmost that one can make Max Müller on this word is that *vishvadevyas* should mean 'for all the *devas*,' but 'destined' is a pure addition unwarranted by grammar. *Vishwadevya* is formed from *vishwadeva* by the addition of the suffix *yat* in the sense of *tatra sadhu*. The meaning is

विश्वेषु देवेषु दिव्यगुणेषु साधुर्विश्वदेव्यः ।[33]

or *Vishvadevyas* is whatsoever is *par excellence* fit to produce useful properties. We have spoken of Max Müller translating *pūshan*, which means strength into a proper noun. *Tvashtri* which simply means one who befits things, or a skilful hand is again converted into a proper noun. *Purodasha* which means food well-cooked is translated into offering. The words 'which is brought with' are, of course, Max Müller's addition to put sense into what would otherwise be without any sense. *Arvat* which, no doubt, sometimes means a horse, here means knowledge. For if horse were intended, some adjective of significance would have so changed the meaning. *Saushravasaya Jinvati* which means "obtains for purpose of a good food," (*Shravas*, in Vedic Sanskrit, meaning food or *anna*) is translated by Max Müller into 'raises to glory.' The true meaning would be, "The goat possessed of useful properties yield milk as a strengthening food for horses. The best cereal is useful when made into pleasant food well prepared by an apt cook according to the modes dictated by specific knowledge of the properties of foods."

We have criticised Max Müller's translation of the first three *mantras* of this *sukta* in detail, to show how he errs at every step; in every case, the error consisting in taking the *rurhi* meaning instead of the *yaugika* one of the word. It will not be difficult to pass from *mantra* to *mantra* till the hymn is finished, and show that the true origin of all errors lies in not recognising the *yaugika* sense of Vedic terms. But we deem the above three *mantras* as sufficient. We however, subjoin herewith Max Müller's translation of the remaining, *mantras* of the hymn, with our occasional remarks in the foot-notes.

Max Müller's translation:

"4. When thrice at the proper seasons men lead around the sacrificial horse which goes to the gods, Pūshan's share comes first, the goat, which announces the sacrifice to the gods.

5. Hotri, Adhvaryu, Avaya (Pratiprasthatri), Agnimindha (Agni dhra), Gravagrabha (Gravastut), and the wise Sanstri (Prasastri), may you fill the streams (round the altar) with a sacrifice which is well prepared and well accomplished.[34]

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6. They who cut the sacrificial post, and they who carry it, they who make the ring for the post of the horse, and even they who bring together what is cooked for the horse, may their work be with us.
7. He came on – (my prayer has been well performed), – the bright backed horse goes to the region of the gods. Wise poets celebrate him, and we have won a good friend for the love of the gods.
8. The halter of the swift one, the heel-ropes of the horse, the head-ropes, the girths, the bridle, and even the grass that has been put into his mouth, may all these which belong to thee be with the gods.
9. What the fly eats of the flesh, what adheres to the stick, or to the axe, or to the hands of the immolator and his nails, may all these which belong to thee be with the gods.[35]
10. The ordure that runs from the belly, and the smallest particle of raw flesh, may the immolators well prepare all this, and dress the sacrifice till it is well-cooked.[36]
11. The juice that flows from thy roasted limb on the spit after thou hast been killed, may it not run on the earth, or the grass; may it be given to the gods who desire it.[37]
12. They who examine the horse when it is roasted, they who say "it smells well, take it away," they who serve the distribution of the meat, may their work also be with us.[38]
13. The ladle of the pot where the meat is cooked, and the vessels for sprinkling the juice, the vessels to keep off the heat, the covers of the vessels, the skewers, and the knives, they adorn the horse.
14. Where he walks, where he sits, where he stirs, the foot-fastening of the horse, what he drinks, and what food he eats, may all these which belong to thee be with the god!
15. May not the fire with smoky smell make thee hiss, may not the glowing cauldron swell and burst. The gods accept the horse if it is offered to them in due form.
16. The cover which they stretch over the horse, and the golden ornaments, the head-ropes of the horse, and the foot-ropes, all these which are dear to the gods, they offer to them.
17. If someone strike thee with the heel or the whip that thou mayest lie down, and thou art snorting with all thy might, then I purify all this with my prayer, as with a spoon of clarified butter at the sacrifices.
18. The axe approaches the thirty-four ribs of the quick horse, beloved of the gods. Do you wisely keep the limbs whole, find out each joint and strike.[39]
19. One strikes the brilliant horse, two hold it, thus is the custom. Those of thy limbs which I have seasonably prepared, I sacrifice in the fire as balls offered to the gods.[40]
20. May not thy dear soul burn thee while thou art coming near, may the axe not stick to thy body. May no greedy and unskilful immolator, missing with the sword, throw thy mangled limbs together.

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21. Indeed thou diest not thus, thou sufferest not; thou goest to the gods on easy paths. The two horses of Indra, the two deer of the *Maruts* have been yoked, and the horse come to the shaft of the ass (of the asvins).[41]
22. May this horse give us cattle and horses, men, progeny and all sustaining wealth. May Aditi keep us free from sin, may the horse of this sacrifice give us strength!"[42]

## AN INDIAN COMMENTATOR

We leave now Max Müller and his interpretations, and come to another commentator of the Vedas, Sāyana. Sāyana may truly be called the father of European Vedic scholarship. Sāyana is the author from whose voluminous commentaries the Europeans have drunk in the deep wells of mythology. It is upon the interpretation of Mādhava Sāyana that the translations of Wilson, Benfey and Langlois are based. It is Sāyana whose commentaries are appealed to in all doubtful cases. "If a dwarf on the shoulders of a giant can see further than the giant, he is no less a dwarf in comparison with the giant." If modern exegetes and lexicographers standing at the top of Sāyana, *i.e.,* with their main knowledge of the Vedas borrowed from Sāyana, should now exclaim, "Sāyana intimates only that sense of the Vedas which was current in India some centuries ago, but comparative philology gives us that meaning which the poets themselves gave to their songs and phrases"; or if they should exclaim that they have the great advantage of putting together ten or twenty passages for examining the sense of a word which occurs in them, which Sāyana had not: nothing is to be wondered at. Mādhava Sāyana, the voluminous commentator of all the Vedas, of the most important *Brahamanas* and a *Kalpa* work, the renowned *Mimansist,* – he, the great grammarian, who wrote the learned commentary on Sanskrit radicals; yes, he is still a model of learning and a colossal giant of memory, in comparison to our modern philologists and scholars. Let modern scholars, therefore, always bear in mind, that Sāyana is the life of their scholarship, their comparative philology, and their so much boasted interpretation of the Vedas. And if Sāyana was himself diseased – whatsoever the value of the efforts of modern scholars – their comparative philology, their new interpretations, and their so-called marvellous achievements cannot but be diseased. Doubt not that the vitality of modern comparative philology and Vedic scholarship is wholly derived from the diseased and defective victuals of Sāyana's learning. Sooner or later, the disease will develop its final symptoms and sap the foundation of the very vitality it seemed to produce. No branch of a tree can live or flourish when separated from the living stock. No interpretations of the Vedas will, in the end, ever succeed unless they are in accord with the living sense of the Vedas in Nirukta and the Brahmanas.

I quote here a *mantra* from Rigveda, and will show how Sāyana's interpretation radically differs from the exposition of Nirukta. The *mantra* runs thus:

ब्रह्मा देवानां पदवीः कवीनामृषिर्विप्राणां महिषो मृगाणाम्।
श्येनो गृध्राणां स्वधितिर्वनानां सोमः पवित्रमत्येति रेभन्।।[43]

Says Sāyana:–

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"God Himself appears as Brahma among the gods, Indra, *Agni* &c. He appears as a poet among the dramatists and writers of lyrics; He appears as Vashishtha, &c. among the Brahmanas; He appears as a buffalo among quadrupeds; He appears as an eagle among birds, He appears as an axe in the forest; He appears as the *soma-juice* purified by *mantras* excelling in its power of purification, the sacred waters of the Ganges, &c., &c."

The translation bears the stamp of the time when it was produced. It is the effort of a Pandit to establish his name by appealing to popular prejudice and feeling. Evidently, when Sāyana wrote, the religion of India was "pantheism" or everything is God; evidently, superstition had so far increased that the waters of the Ganges were regarded as sacred; incarnations were believed in; the worship of Brahma, Vasishtha and other *rishis* was at its acme. It was probably the age of the dramatists and poets. Sāyana was himself a resident of some city or town. He was not a villager. He was familiar with the axe as an instrument of the destruction of forests, &c., but not with the lightning or fire as a similar but more powerful agent. His translation does not mirror the sense of the Vedas but that of his own age. His interpretation of *brahma, kavi, deva, rishi, vipra, mahisha, mriga, shyena, gridhra, vana, soma, pavitra* – of all these words, without one exception, is purely *rurhi* or *laukika.*

Now follows the exposition of Yāska in his Nirukta xiv.13. There is not a single word that is not taken in its *yaugika* sense. Says Yāska:

अथाध्यात्मम् – ब्रह्मा देवानामित्ययमपि ब्रह्मा भवति देवानां देवनकर्मणामिन्द्रियाणां, पदवीः कवीनामित्ययमपि पदं वेत्ति कवीनां कवीयमानानामिन्द्रियाणाम्, ऋषिर्विप्राणामित्ययमप्यृषणो भवति विप्राणां व्यापनकर्मणामिन्द्रियाणां, महिषो मृगाणामित्ययमपि महान् भवति मृगाणां मार्गणकर्मणामिन्द्रियाणां, श्येनो गृध्राणामिति श्येन आत्मा भवति श्यायतेर्ज्ञानकर्मणाः, गृध्राणीन्द्रियाणि गृध्यतेर्ज्ञानकर्मणो यत एतस्मिंस्तिष्ठति, स्वधितिर्वनानामित्ययमपि स्वयं कर्म्माण्यात्मनि धत्ते वनानां वननकर्मणामिन्द्रियाणां, सोमः पवित्रमत्येति... स्तूयमानोऽयमेवैतत् सर्वमनुभवत्यात्मगतिमाचष्टे।[44]

We will now speak of the spiritual sense of the *mantra* as Yāska gives it. It is his object to explain that the human spirit is the central conscious being that enjoys all experience. The external world as revealed by the senses finds its purpose and object and therefore absorption in this central being. The *indriyas* or the senses are called the *devas*, because they have their play in the external phenomenal world and because it is by them that the external world is revealed to us. Hence *Ātmā*, the human spirit is the *brahma devanam*, the conscious entity that presents to its consciousness all that the senses reveal. Similarly, the senses are called the *kavayas*, because one learns by their means. The *Ātmā*, then, is *padavi kavinam*, or the true sentient being that understands the working of the senses. Further, the *Ātmā* is *rishir viprānam*, the cognisor of sensations; *vipra* meaning the senses as the feelings excited by them pervade the whole body. The senses are also called the *mrigas*, for they hunt about their proper ailment in the external world. *Ātmā* is *mahisho mriganam, i.e.*, the great of all the hunters. The meaning is that it is really through the power of *Ātmā* that the senses are enabled to find out their proper objects. The *Ātmā* is called *shyena*, as to it belongs the power of realisation; and *gridhras* are the *indriyas*, for they provide the material for such realisation. The *Ātmā*, then, pervades these senses. Further, this *Ātmā* is *swadhitir vananam*, or the master, whom all *indriyas* serve. *Swadhiti* means *Ātmā*, for the activity of

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*Ātmā* is all for itself, man being an end unto himself. The senses are called *vana*, for they serve their master, the human spirit. It is this *Ātmā* that being pure in its nature, enjoys all. Such, then, is the *yaugika* sense which Yāska attaches to the *mantra*. Not only is it all consistent and intelligible, unlike Sāyana's, which conveys no actual sense; not only is each word clearly defined in its *yaugika* meaning, in contradistinction with Sāyana who knows no other sense of the word than the popular one; but there is also to be found that simplicity, naturalness and truthfulness of meaning, rendering it independent of all time and space, which, contrasted with the artificiality, burdensomeness and localisation of Sāyana's sense, can only proclaim Sāyana's complete *ignorance* of principles of Vedic interpretation.

This is Sāyana, upon whose commentaries of the Vedas are based the translation of European scholars.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. This essay was first carried by Arya Patrika (Lahore) in its issues on 11th July, 1st August, 19th September and October 10, 1885 respectively. It is quoted here from *Works of Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi*, (ed. Ram Prakash, Dr.), 2013, Sahibabad, pp. 1-12, Editor.
2. E. Pococke, 1852, *India in Greece*, John J. Griffin & Co., London.
3. *Mahābhāshya*, 3.3.1
4. This essay entitled "*The Terminology of the Vedas and the European Scholars*" was first published in the Vedic Magazine (Lahore), ed. Guru Datta Vidyarthi, in 1889. It is reproduced here from *Works of Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi*, (ed. Ram Prakash, Dr.), pp. 19-41, Editor.
5. *Mahābhāshya*, 3.3.1
6. J. Muir, 1873, *Original Sanskrit Texts*, Vol. III, Trubner & Co., London, pp. 232-234
7. See *Nighaṇṭu*, 3.13
8. *Ibid.*, 5.5
9. *Ibid.*, 3.2
10. F. Max Müller, 1859, *A History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature*, Williams and Norgate, Covent Garden, London and South Frederick Street, Edinburgh, p. 553.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 557-558
12. *Ibid.*, p. 553
13. *Ibid.*, p. 526
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15. *Nirukta*, 7.12
16. *Śatapatha*, VIII.2.
17. *Uṇādi Koṣa*, iv, 219.
18. F. Max Müller, *op. cit.*, p. 568.
19. F. Max Müller, 1873, *Introduction on the Science of Religion*, Longmans, London (1873), pp. 276-277.
20. Section subhead has been added by the editors.
21. Monier Williams', 1893, *Indian Wisdom*, Luzac & Co., London, p.16.
22. *Ṛgveda*, 1.162
23. *Ibid.*, 1.162.1
24. F. Max Müller, *A History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature*, p. 553.
25. Swami Dayanand, 1986, *Ṛgveda-bhāshyam*, part 3, Vedic Pustkalaya, Ajmer, p. 313, Editor.
26. *Ṛgveda*, 1.27.1
27. *Ibid.*, 3.27.14

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28. *Śatapātha Brāhmaṇa*, 1.4.1.29-30.
29. *Ṛgveda*, 1.162.2
30. *Nighaṇṭu*, 2.10
31. *Yāska*, 6.7
32. *Ṛgveda*, 1.162.3
33. *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, IV.4.98
34. F. Max Müller herein puts five words as proper nouns, and thus does not accept their *yaugika* sense. The words 'round the altar' are supplied by Müller's imagination on the ground that sacrifices are conducted at the altar. Both ideas are foreign to Vedic philosophy.
35. Here Max Müller does not understand the structure of the sentence.
    The original words are *ashvasya kravisho* which he takes to mean 'the flesh of the horse,' but *kravisho* is an adjective qualifying *ashvasya*, the whole really means,' 'of the pacing horse.' *Kravisho* does not mean 'of the flesh' but 'pacing' from the root *kram*, to pace. The meaning would be. "What the fly eats of whatever dirty adheres to the horse," etc. Again the words *swarau* and *swadhittu* are translated into stick and axe which is never their meaning.
36. *Amasya kravisho*, which means 'raw food yet undigested and disposed to come out' is similarly translated by Müller into 'raw flesh' here. *Ama* is the state of the undigested food in the belly. Here again, Müller does not follow the structure of the *mantra*.
37. *Agnina pachyamauad*, which means 'forced by the heat of anger,' is translated by Müller as 'roasted,' and *hatasya*, which means 'propelled,' is here translated by Müller as 'killed."
38. The translation is specially noteworthy. The word *wajinam* from *waja*, cereals, is here taken as meaning 'horse' and Max Müller is so anxious to bring forth the sense of the sacrifice of the horse that, not content with this, he interprets *mansa bhiksham upaste*, which means 'he serves the *absence* of meat' into 'serves the meat.' Can there be anything more questionable?
39. The number of ribs mentioned by Müller is worth being counted and verified *Vankri* which means 'a zigzag motion' is here translated as 'rib.' This requires proof.
40. *Twashtu rashvasya* is here translated as 'brilliant horse,' as if *ashva* were the noun and *tvashta* its qualifying adjective. The reverse is the truth. *Twastha* is the noun signifying electricity, and *ashva* is the qualifying adjective signifying all-pervading. The words, 'offered to the gods,' in the end are pure addition of Max Müller, to give the whole a mythological coloring.
41. *Hari* is again as a *rurhi* word translated into "two horses of Indra" and *prishati*, into "two deer of *maruts*. "The 'shaft of the ass' is, perhaps, the greatest curiosity Max Müller could present as a sign of mythology.
42. F. Max Müller, *A History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature*, pp. 553-556.
43. *Ṛgveda*, 9.96.6
44. *Nirukta*, 14.13

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# CHAPTER 22

# Veda: The Technique of Interpretation

*Tulsi Ram*

The Scripture:
Is a scripture,
Is a scripture,
Is a scripture.

Read the scripture on its own terms. If you approach a scripture with a sceptical mind, a judgmental attitude, or preconceived notions, you would not understand the meaning and message of the scripture. The scripture should be approached with reverence, an open mind, and a desire to seek with an honest purpose. If you do so, the scripture will reveal itself to you in all its openness.

Lord Krishna says: *Tadviddhi pranipātena paripraśnena sevayā.*[1] Know 'that' with surrender, ask questions with honesty, with commitment to follow and serve. That is the technique of the interpretation of any scripture. That is the way of learning for self-realisation up to the stage of God's realisation.

Veda is the oldest and first complete scripture of the world. It comprises the four Vedas: Ṛgveda, Yajurveda, Sāmaveda and Atharvaveda. The Yajurveda says: "From the Lord Creator of the universe were received the *Ṛk*, the *Samans*, the *Chandas* (Atharva) and the *Yajus*"[2] at the dawn of creation.

Veda is not a Book, but a *Sanātana Vidyā* – Eternal Knowledge, complete in essence, Universal, Divine. It is not even a 'Hindu scripture'. It is for all mankind,[3] no matter whether one is of a high status or low, rich or poor, man or woman. It is for any one whosoever cares to seek and know. It is called a 'Hindu scripture' only because the people, now known as 'Hindu' over the course of history, subscribe to it. Everyone has a right to the Veda as his/her own heritage.

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The western tradition also accepts that Veda is the oldest scripture of the world. Says Max Müller about India and the Veda: "The Veda has a two-fold interest: it belongs to the history of the world and to the history of India... As long as man continues to take interest in the history of his race, and as long as we collect in libraries and museums the relics of former ages, the first place in that long row of books which contain the records of the 'Aryan' branch of mankind will belong forever to the Ṛgveda."[4]

And what is the date of this first record of the 'Aryan branch'? Max Müller had once ventured to pronounce a purely arbitrary date based on unproven assumptions that the date of the Ṛgveda was around 1200 B.C. But later he himself warned his students that "Whether the Vedic hymns were composed in 1000 or 1500 or 2000 B.C., no power on earth could ever determine... Whatever may be the date of the Vedic hymns they have their own unique place and stand by themselves."[5] Another western scholar, Mr. Pincott, once a missionary in India, is clear about the age of the Veda: "The term Veda applies only to that portion of Sanskrit literature (i.e., the *Samhitās*) which existed before the historical period commenced."[6] He continues, but adds a conditioned limitation: "The Vedas, properly speaking, comprise only that fragment of Hindu literature which is believed to be the revealed Word of God; and the term is precisely equivalent to the Bible among Christians and the Quran among Musalmans."[7] It is to be noted that all such assumptions of the western scholars about the age of the Vedas and their historical context have been challenged and rejected by Graham Hancock in his research work.[8]

Two opposing stand-points emerge from these observations, which are important because they have a bearing on the technique of Vedic interpretation:

1. The Vedas are pre-historic. They have their unique place in the world literature. They are self-existent and incomparable, and therefore they cannot be interpreted in the historical-comparative manner in which other, historical, scriptures are interpreted. Or
2. They are historical, as the Bible and the Qur'ān, so they too have a historical context, comparable, not self-existent, and they can be interpreted in the historical-comparative manner.

The two points of view are contradictory: This equalisation of two unequals is the basis of:

(i) The western eye-close to the difference between the language and style of the pre-historic Veda and that of the historical Bible and the Qur'ān on the one hand, and

(ii) The misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the Vedas in respect of both the context and the language and the meaning and message, especially in a created context.

Hence faulty historical and interpretive contexts were created for the Vedas by western scholars.

## THE CONTEXTS

There are two contexts of the translation of the Vedas: the Original and the Created.

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The Original context is impersonal, since Veda is *Apauruṣeya*, beyond history, beyond time, Universal, Eternal. It relates to the ONE alone who exists with His own essential Potential, *Svadhā*.[9] The 'heart beats' of that inexplicable 'State' of the One are *Iḍā*,[10] the Silent State of the Infinity of Language, subsisting in the Infinite Consciousness. The vibrations of that Infinity in Cosmic flow is *Saraswati*, the flow received in terms of the Rishi's consciousness in the state of *Samādhi* communion, *Śruti*; in terms of articulation it is *Vedamātā*[11]; in terms of correspondence with the objective creative evolution it is *Ṛtam and Satyam*,[12] Constant and Mutable. In terms of human language it is the open-ended unity of the raw material of all the vast diversity of languages across the globe, *Mahī*.[13] Any translation of the Veda in any human language anywhere at any time, even supposedly the best and the closest, would fall short of the original. And that too, without the state of '*praṇipāta*', unconditional surrender, would not do justice even to the translator himself.

The other context is the created one: The universal transformed into mythological, the mythological transformed into historical, the historical transformed into tribal, and the tribal turned into conflictive, the invader immigrants of the 'Aryan mould' of western imagination versus the native inhabitants of ancient India, precisely in line with the Biblical wars of migration and settlement described in the Old Testament of the Bible.

***Creation of the Context – Historical***

Once the Veda is equated with the Bible and the Qur'ān, it becomes a human document created by a community in a historical context – which too is 'created' by the western interpreters. It no longer remains the divine articulation of Universal Knowledge. "It is a historical document", says Griffith in his Preface to *The Hymns of the Ṛgveda*, with "certain hymns being rather Indo-European than Hindu, and representing the condition of the 'Aryans' before (and during) their final settlement in India." A universal scripture is thus down-graded first to a Hindu document – though the word 'Hindu' does not occur in the Vedas and then the 'Hindu community' is mixed up with the Indo-Europeans and the 'Aryan invaders' of India of the European imagination.

Following this historical line of argument, Griffith describes the nature and character of Ṛgveda in this way:[14]

> The Samhitā of the Ṛgveda is a collection of hymns and songs brought by the remote ancestors of the present Hindus from their ancient homes on the banks of the Indus where they had been first used in adoration of the Father of Heaven, of the Sun, of the Dawn, of Agni or the God of fire, in prayers of health, wealth, long life, off-spring, cattle, victory in battle, and the freedom from the bonds of sin; and celebration of the ever-renewed warfare between the beneficent thunder-wielding Indra, the special champion of the 'Aryans', and the malevolent powers of darkness and demons of drought who withheld the rains of heaven.

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The head of these 'malevolent powers' is *Vṛtra*, the dark cloud laden with vapours. But in a note on the translation of Ṛgveda, 1.32.11, the 'dark vapours of water' is interpreted and translated as "Thralls of Dasas", fighting under the power and force of *Vṛtra*, the native Indian leader, as his allies."

The word *Dasa* is a general term in the Veda applied to certain negative forces, evil powers or destructive processes of nature and life, something demonic, hostile to *Indra*, the divine power of creativity and progress. But in Griffith's translation it has been interpreted as a savage, a barbarian, one of the non-Aryan inhabitants of India. In the translation of Ṛgveda, 1,33,4, similarly, the word *ayajvānaḥ* has been interpreted as "the ancient riteless ones: the followers of *Vṛtra*; here apparently identified with indigenous (native) races who had not adopted or were hostile to the ritual of the Veda." The term '*ayajvānaḥ*' originally means those who follow an anti-yajñic way of life, i.e., a purely negative, destructive, anti-social, uncharitable, a wholly uncreative way of life. It has nothing to do with any history of any community or community at any stage of development. It is a general description of negative people.

Here in the same context, significantly, Griffith quotes a note of Wilson's on Ṛgveda, 1.32.1:

> In this and subsequent Sūktas we have an ample elucidation of the original purport of the legend of *Indra's* (deeds) slaying *Vṛtra*, converted by the '*Paurāṇic*' writers into a literal contest between *Indra* and an *Asura* (demon), chief of the *Asuras*, from what in the Vedas is merely an allegorical narrative of the production of rain. *Vṛtra*, sometimes also called *Ahi* (cloud), is nothing more than the accumulation of vapour, condensed or figuratively shut up in, or obstructed by, a cloud. Indra, with his thunder-bolt, or atmospheric or electrical influence, divides the aggregated mass, and vent is given to the rain which then descends to the earth.

According to Wilson, as according to Swami Dayanand also, 'the battle of *Indra* and *Vṛtra*' is a scientific, physical, universal phenomenon of nature, expressed in the language of cosmic poetry. The poets of the *Purāṇas* turn the poetic statement of a physical fact into a myth of a battle between a deva and a demon, which is an instance of what in the Indian tradition is known as *Devāsura saṅgrāma*. And the translator, perhaps for some extrapolative motivation, turns the myth into a historical warfare between 'the Aryan invaders' and the 'native, indigenous Indian inhabitants' of the European imagination.

This conversion of the universal, unique, self-existent *Sanātana Vidyā*, Eternal Knowledge, is thus turned into tribal lore and 'its close' is described by Pincott as follows:

> The growth of this wild jungle of scholarship and fable was brought to stoppage by successive Muhammadan incursions, and by the final subjugation of the country to Mughal rule. Under a more enlightened (British) administration, the

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> intellect of India is again developing, and wisely returning to a study of those real models of national development found in the hymns of the Ṛgveda.[15]

This means that the way to reinterpretation is thrown open under the colonial dispensation with a motivation of the interpreter's choice.

***Creation of the Context – Interpretive***

This conversion of the self-existent context of the Vedas from the prehistoric universal to the 'historical tribal' could not have been possible without a strong motivation for a deeper and wider conversion of comprehensive nature: political, religious, cultural, intellectual, in short, total, for the colonisation and 'reclamation of a decomposed society,' in Macaulay's language, towards a new enlightenment of the modern age.

The plan for the deeper and wider conversion formally started in 1793 with Macaulay's godfather, Charles Grant. Grant was an important Member of Parliament, President of the East India Company Board of Control, and a passionate Evangelist member of the Clapham Society. In 1792, he wrote his "Observations on the State of Society among the Asiatic Subjects of Great Britain, particularly with respect to Morals and the Means of improving it." In his Observations, he made two suggestions:

1. English be introduced in India as the medium of instruction in a western system of education, the subjects of study being useful information or useful literature, natural sciences, mechanical inventions, etc.
2. English be adopted as the official language of the Government, for it would provide an easy channel of communication between the rulers and their subjects.

This was supposedly a secular programme. But the real higher objective of education was religious:

> Wherever this knowledge would be received, idolatry with all the rabble of its impure deities, its monsters of wood and stone, its false principles and corrupt practices, its delusive hopes and vain fears, its ridiculous ceremonies and degrading superstitions, its lying legends and fraudulent impositions, would fall. The reasonable service to the only infinitely perfect God would be established: love to Him, peace and goodwill towards men, would be felt as obligatory principles.[16]

This was the programme of the conversion of 'Hindus' to Christianity camouflaged in secular garments. To this effect, Charles Grant introduced a bill in Parliament in 1793. The bill was accepted and passed on principle.

Efforts for English education continued from 1793 through 1813 to 1835. The year 1835, the month of March, is very significant in the history of education in India: William Bentinck, Charles Grant's friend, was the Governor General. Charles Grant's son, Charles Grant (junior), was Chairman of the Board of Control of the East India Company. Lord Macaulay, Charles Grant's godson, was the very influential Law

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Member of the Governor General's Council. He was also President of the Governor General's Committee of Public Instruction.

In 1835, Macaulay wrote the famous Minute on Education[17] which is well-known for his remarks on Indian literature, Indian history, and on the purpose of English education. Some of his remarks on Indian literature are given here, selected and adopted from his Minute:

Indian literature: "A single shelf of a good European library is worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia."

Sanskrit: Hindu attachment to Sanskrit: "Are we to teach Sanskrit because it is fruitful of monstrous superstitions? We are to teach false history, false astronomy, false medicine, because we find them in company with a false religion?"

Sanskrit Students: "They waste their youth in learning how they are to purify themselves after touching an ass, or what text of the Vedas they are to repeat to expiate the crime of killing a goat."

Sanskrit Books: "They are less valuable than the paper on which they are printed."

English educated people: "We must do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, opinions, in morals, and in intellect."

The Successors: "To that class we may leave it to refine their native languages... for conveying knowledge to the great mass of this population."

The Governor General accepted the Minute, all the proposals, and English rose to be the ruling language of education and governance. English retains that supremacy till today.

Then followed what in India is known as the Macaulay-Max Müller conspiracy in relation to the Vedas and Hinduism. After the introduction of English by the Government as the medium and content of education, it became the means of the transplantation of an age-old Indian culture and religion. In 1836, Macaulay wrote to his father:

> No Hindu, who has received an English education, ever remains sincerely attached to his religion... It is my firm belief that if our plans of education are followed up, there will not be a single idolator among the respectable classes in Bengal thirty years hence. And this will be effected without any effort to proselytize; without the smallest interference in their religious liberty; merely by the operation of knowledge and reflection.[18]

Come Max Müller, the famous, 'indispensable' translator of the *Sacred Books of the East*, especially the Vedas. He was a colonialist Evangelist who too wanted to see India converted to Christianity. He was appointed Professor of Sanskrit, at the University of Oxford in 1854. On December 16, 1868, he wrote to the Secretary of State for India, Duke of Orgoil: "The ancient religion of India is doomed and if Christianity does not step in, whose fault will it be?"[19] The same year, he wrote to his wife: "I hope I shall finish that work (i.e., translation of the Vedas) and feel convinced that though I shall

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not live to see it, yet this edition of mine and translation of Vedas will hereafter tell to a great extent on the fate of India and on the growth of millions of the souls in this country." He observed further in the same letter, "Veda is the root of their religion and to show them what that root is, I feel sure, is the only way of uprooting all that has been sprung from it during the last three thousand years."[20]

This attitude and intention in the field of academic integrity has been studied by Rajiv Malhotra[21] in his book.

Thus a new context for the interpretation of the Vedas was being created – in fact it had been created and still continues to be created, extended and strengthened – The new technique of interpretation and translation would, then, depend upon the context, real or supposed or created, and on the purpose and motivation of the interpreter. *Tadviddhi pranipātena...* would be thrown overboard and learning would vacate for pride and arrogance either in the open or in camouflage.

## THE METHODS

### *Toward the Translation*

We have mentioned two contexts of the translation of the Vedas: the Original and the Created. From the context, flows the method of interpretation.

The Ārṣa Method rests on the fact that the Vedas are pre-historic, and therefore the language of the Vedas too is prehistoric. It is meta-language, self-existent as the Veda itself. It has to be interpreted on its own, according to the interpretive principles of its own, i.e., without reference to any other book of the historical period. The principles and methods of interpretation are laid down in the Nirukta of Yāska, and the books of Pāṇini, Patañjali and others. This method is known as the 'Ārṣa method', i.e., the method of the ancient Rishis. These works were known to the western interpreters too. The nature and structure of Sanskrit, both Vedic and Classical, was known to them.

The other method, as pursued by the western interpreters, is described by them as 'the modern, scientific, historical comparative method', applied to Vedic interpretation with comparative reference to other revealed books supposed to be cognate with the Vedas as revelations. Such books considered by them are the Bible, the Qur'ān, Greek and other mythologies, the Iliad and the Odyssey.

The western scholars knew the nature and structure of the Sanskrit language but they chose to interpret it in their own way. Monier Williams,[22] the famous author of the *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, first published in 1899, pays a tribute to the word-structure of Sanskrit and its nature as language:

> I draw attention at the very threshold (of the Dictionary) to the fact that the Hindus are perhaps the only nation, except the Greeks, who have investigated, independently and in a truly scientific manner, the general laws which govern the evolution of language.
>
> The synthetical process ('integrative' would be the right word) which comes into operation in the working of those laws may be well called *Samskaraṇa*, 'putting together' by which I mean that every word in the highest type of language

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> (called Sanskrita) is first evolved out of a primary *Dhātu*, a Sanskrit term usually translated by '*Root*', but applicable to any primordial constituent substance, whether of the words, or rocks, or living organisms and then, being so evolved, goes through a process of 'putting together' by the combination of other elementary constituents.
>
> Further, the process of 'putting together' implies, of course, the possibility of a converse process *vyākaraṇa*, by which I mean 'undoing or decomposition' ('deconstruction' would be a better term) that is to say, the resolution of every root evolved word into its component elements. So that in endeavouring to exhibit these processes of synthesis and analysis, we appear to be engaged, like a chemist (better biologist), in combining elementary substances into solid forms, and again in resolving these forms into their constituent ingredients.

Appreciating the tremendous variety of word formation from the roots, Monier Williams says:

> A Sanskrit root is generally a single monosyllable, consisting of one or more consonants combined with a vowel, or sometimes of a single vowel only. This monosyllabic radical... has usually one fixed and unchangeable initial letter, but in its general character it may rather be compared to a malleable substance capable of being beaten out or moulded into countless ever-variable forms, and often in such a way as to entail the loss of one or other of the original radical letters; new forms being, as it were, beaten out of the primitive monosyllabic ore, and these forms again expanded by affixes and suffixes, and these again by other affixes and suffixes, while every so expanded form may be again augmented by prepositions and again by compositions with other words and again by compounds of compounds till an almost interminable chain of derivatives is evolved. And this peculiar expansibility arises partly from the circumstance that the vowel is recognised as an independent constituent of every Sanskrit radical, constituting a part of its every essence or even sometimes standing alone as itself the only root.[23]

Monier Williams says that some scholars trace all Sanskrit words to about 2000 roots, others to 1750, yet others to 2490, or may be 4000. Even as some think they could be traced to about 120 primitive roots. (And, on our own, we may hope, some scholars, in some remote future, may be able to trace all words to the basic essential sounds, only three: A,U,M, and these three are, as One. The last words of Yajurveda and the opening mantra of *Māṇḍūkyopaniṣad* point to this possibility.)

In addition to Sanskrit roots and words, Monier Williams pays tribute to Sanskrit accentuation:

> The importance of correct accentuation and intonation in a language (i.e., Sanskrit), the very sound of which is held by the Hindus to be divine, and the bearing of Sanskrit accentuation on that of Greek, had become so impressed on

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> me, that when I was sent as a Delegate to the Berlin International Congress of Orientalists by the Government of India in 1881, I requested Pandit Shyamji Krishnavarma (who was also a Government Delegate) to illustrate my paper on Vedic hymns by repeating (reciting) them with the right accentuation. The Pandit's illustrations were not only much appreciated but received with grateful acknowledgements at the time by the eminent Chairman, Professor A. Weber [a great scholar], and other Sanskrit scholars present, but were misconstrued by one of my auditors – the well known and most energetic Hon. Secretary of the Royal Asiatic Society. That gentleman made the Pandit's illustrative additions the subject of an extraordinary criticism in a paper on 'Oriental Congresses' written by him and published in the *Calcutta Review*, No. CLXI (1885) and quite recently reprinted. A letter lately received by me from Prof. A. Weber, and printed last year in the *Asiatic Quarterly Review*, expresses the astonishment which we both felt at the statements in the paper.[24]

Here we have one example of the western official attitude and that of the scholars to the Veda and to the language of the Veda.

We have quoted Monier Williams in detail on the integrative nature, structure and semantics of Sanskrit. In his view, the ideal Sanskrit Dictionary should be a root-arranged dictionary. He admits that he could not prepare such a dictionary, and regrets that a root-arranged perfect dictionary of his plan and imagination remained with him "only a pious dream, unsuited to the needs of ordinary students."

Why unsuited? He explains in the Preface of his Dictionary:

> I must draw attention to the fact that I am only the second occupant of the Boden (Professorial) Chair, and that its Founder, Colonel Boden, stated most explicitly in his will (dated August 15, 1811) that the special object of his (Boden's) munificent bequest was to promote the translation of the scriptures (Bible) into Sanskrit, so as 'to enable his countrymen to proceed in the conversion of the natives of India to the Christian Religion'... Surely then it need not be thought surprising, if following in the footsteps of my venerated master (Professor H.H. Wilson), I have made it the chief aim of my professorial life to provide facilities for the translation of our sacred scriptures (Bible) into Sanskrit, and for the promotion of a better knowledge of the religions and customs of India, as the best key to knowledge of the religious needs of our great Eastern Dependency (i.e., India). My very first public lecture delivered after my election in 1860 was on 'The study of Sanskrit in Relation to Missionary Work in India' (published in 1861).[25]

In all these words quoted above, Monier Williams sums up the integrative seeds and the natural evolutionary growth of Sanskrit in correspondence with the nature and structure of other phenomena of natural and social reality. By implication he has explained the method of interpretation and translation of Sanskrit works specially the Vedas: The Vedas, being prehistoric, exist on their own, articulated in a language

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existing on its own, to be interpreted on the principles of *Samskaraṇa* and *Vyākaraṇa*, to be translated in the manner thus suggested. This same method has been suggested by the ancient sages such as Yāska, Pāṇini, Patañjali and others. This method got slowly mixed up with the historical development of languages in general, and in the times of Macaulay and scholars such as Williams, Max Müller and others, it got vitiated with colonial politics and politicians. Nevertheless it survived silently up to Swami Virjanand Dandi and was transmitted by him to his disciple Swami Dayanand Saraswati. Swami Dayanand revived the ancient tradition and in the same tradition translated the Vedas, Yajurveda in full and Ṛgveda only in part.

***Near-total Rejection of Indian Interpreters***

The western interpreters knew Swami Dayanand too. Max Müller, who was committed to the dismantling of the foundations (the Vedas) of the Indian culture and Sanātana Dharma, did confess that words of the Veda which appeared to be 'name-words' apparently did retain their radical meaning as attributes, i.e., even as 'name words', they were general, not proper names of particular persons. He even had to admit that

> To him (Swami Dayanand) not only was everything contained in the Vedas perfect truth, but he went a step further and by the most incredible interpretations, succeeded in persuading himself and others that everything worth knowing, even the most recent inventions of modern science, were alluded to in the Vedas. Steam-engines, railways, and steam-boats, all were shown to have been known, at least in their germs, to the poets of the Vedas.[26]

Here is a twentieth century voice in appreciation of Swami Dayanand expressed by R.C. Zaehner, Professor of Oriental Religions and Ethics, at the University of Oxford:

> Hitherto commentators of the Vedas, both Indian and European, had taught that the *Samhitās* were polytheistic since the gods, Agni, Indra, Varuṇa, and so on, were distinct and had distinct personalities. This, Dayanand violently denied. It (i.e., polytheism) might be true if the Vedas were interpreted in a 'worldly' manner (i.e., if the words were interpreted to mean what they mean in the contemporary language), but it was not true of them if they were interpreted in a 'yogic' manner, which he (Dayanand) maintained was alone valid.
> The Veda was not, as according to the orthodox, merely a book which had taken shape in the course of history, it was *Sanātana Dharma*, '*eternal law*' and as such it exists in its own right outside and independently of time. It is eternal truth and contains all that is necessary to salvation; but it needs to be correctly interpreted and it was Dayanand alone who held the key to this true interpretation.[27]

Zaehner, here, underscores the prehistoric, impersonal (*apaurṣeya*) character of the Vedas, self-existent, articulated in pre-historic self-existent, expressive language, to be interpreted according to its self-existing laws, in relation to the knowledge of nature, humanity and Divinity, at the dawn of history, (before the struggles of history anywhere

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had begun, before even the history of the development and change of human language had begun, and long long before the Tower of Babel described in the Bible). (Genesis 11, 1-9).

But the translators would not agree. As Griffiths says:

> These four Vedas are considered to be of divine origin and to have existed from all eternity, the Rishis or sacred poets to whom the hymns are ascribed being merely inspired seers who saw or received them by sight (*darśan*) directly from the Supreme Creator. In accordance with this belief these sacred books have been preserved and handed down with the most reverential care from generation to generation and have accompanied the great army of Aryan immigrants in their onward march from (the steppes of Southern Russia, or Northern Europe or somewhere in Central Asia, and probably in the region of Bactria (Balkh) and Sogdiana) from the land of the Seven Rivers to the Indian Ocean and the Bay of Bengal.[28]

Thus the Impersonal Sanātan Knowledge of the Veda is, sadly, reduced to 'the records of the superstitions, occult religious practices and hymns of prayers to the many-many monstrous gods of wood and stone of a tribal society, believing in false religion'. The meta-language of pre-historic time, with an extremely sensitive system of accent and meaning and general open-ended integrative nature and structure is reduced to 'the primitive jargon of a belligerent society'.

Swami Dayanand's method of interpretation and translation of the Vedas does not fit into this western scenario. Swami Dayanand in fact challenges the western approach and performance in his *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā*. The western interpreters turn self-defensive themselves and try to reduce him to someone writing in self-defence against the challenges of a monotheistic Christianity. They work out their own view of Swami Dayanand's '*Veda Bhāshya*'. They regard it as 'wrong, subjective, diplomatic, and even dishonest', on the basis of their own assumptions. Their assumptions are summed up by Harold Coward who was Director of the Calgary Institute for Humanities, University of Calgary (Canada). He says that Swami Dayanand's interpretation of the Vedas was based on *a-priori* assumptions that:

1. God is one and Only One, (and this in defensive response to Christian Monotheism. Even his belief in the trinity of God, *jīva* and *prakṛti* is a version of the Christian Trinity.)
2. Vedas are the articulation of God's Omniscience, and therefore they are the record of universal truth, full and final.
3. Since Vedic truth is universal, all 'name words' of persons and places are general, not particular. And since universal knowledge existed even before history, such words are statements of principles and ideas, or general descriptions of types and characters. So he converted Vedic mythology into rational knowledge and thus demythologised the Vedas (against all reason of the western norm).
4. Since Vedas are divine truth, there can be nothing false or irrational in them.

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Thus, they say that Swami Dayanand twisted the Vedic content and fitted it into the framework of western Christianity and rationalism. Harold Coward thought negatively and called the above four items Swami Dayanand's self-created 'assumptions'. But J.N. Farquhar, another missionary, thought of these as Swamiji's convictions based on his own *Ārṣa* interpretation of the Vedas. All these views of the Vedas and Swami Dayanand's *Ārṣa* method of interpretation have been collected in *Rishi Dayananda in the eyes of the West.*[29]

***Non-adoption of the Ārṣa Method***

We now come to the other method of interpretation described by its adherents and practitioners as 'the modern, scientific, historical, comparative, and contextual method'. This method arose far outside of the *Ārṣa* method in their new historical situation.

The western nations expanded across the globe over the colonies including India, discovered the Vedas and other works in Sanskrit, admired the unique character of Sanskrit as quoted above, but, in spite of that uniqueness, chose to structure their own method of interpretation according to their own (arbitrary?) 'scientific discoveries of the historical laws of language development and change'. These laws should not have been applied to the interpretation of the pre-historic Vedas, but for historical, colonialist and Evangelical reasons, again, the westerners forced the Vedas into that structured pattern of history and converted the Vedic lore into a 'conglomeration of primitive rudeness, childish simplicity, natural poetry, myth and story, and even the vulgarity of an uncivilised society.'

In the new created context, the Vedas were accepted as Revelation (not as *śruti*), and thus they were equated with the Bible and the Qur'ān. The result was that the historical character of the Bible and the Qur'ān and the historical character and social character of their language-in-society was foisted onto the Vedas. The impersonal (*apaurṣeya*), self-existent character of Vedic knowledge and Vedic language was rejected and subjected to the historical-evolutionary character of knowledge and expression across the dynamics of society.

Griffith in his Preface to *The Hymns of the Ṛgveda* describes the method followed by him and his compeers in their translation. He expresses thanks to Sāyaṇa, the medieval translator, calls him his first guide, but actually accepts him only as an assistant wherever it suits him. He expresses thanks to H.H. Wilson, Roth, Benfey, Weber, Ludvig, Max Müller, Grassman, the famous philologist, and Monier Williams. He says that the 'moderns' do not accept the medieval Indian translators as a rule because they (the moderns) want to "search out the sense which the poets themselves have put into their hymns and utterances," and they follow the path prescribed by philology to derive from the texts themselves the sense which they contain, by "a juxtaposition of all the passages which are cognate in diction or content", in other works. He does not give any illustration of his practice or of the other works he uses for his explanations, nor does he cite any works regarded as contemporaneous with the Vedas.

Griffith quotes Max Müller to say why they do not accept the Indian interpreters:

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As the authors of the *Brāhmaṇas* were blinded by theology, the authors of the still later *Niruktas* were deceived by etymological fictions, and both conspired to mislead by their authority later and more sensible commentators such as Sāyaṇa. Where Sāyaṇa has no (earlier) authority to mislead him, his commentary is at all events rational; but still his scholastic notions would never allow him to accept the free interpretation which comparative study of these venerable documents forces upon the unprejudiced scholars. We must therefore discover ourselves the real vestiges of these ancient poets.[30]

Griffith quotes Benfey to say that there must have been an unimaginable gap between the Veda and the next Sanskrit works of explanation and commentary on the Vedas; the only works available for interpretive purpose must have been the ritual works (such as *Gṛhyasūtras*) and works of Grammar and lexicography (such as *Nirukta, Aṣṭādhyāyī* and *Mahābhāshyam*), though all these also fall too short of the aids available to the 'modern interpreters', works such as the *Zend* and those in other languages cognate to Sanskrit. Yet in spite of all the Indian aids, the "Indian method of interpretation in its whole essence is an entirely false one, as compared to the 'modern'."

Griffith brings in Goldstucker saying that without the aid of the Indian interpreters up to Sāyaṇa, the Europeans will have no rightful entry into the doors of Hindu antiquity, yet, as J. Muir says, Goldstucker too heretically deviates from Sāyaṇa. He quotes E.B. Cowell to say that though Wilson's translation of Ṛgveda gives some image of the medieval Hindu view of the Veda as found in Sāyaṇa, still a far wider and deeper study is needed to pierce to the real meaning of these ancient hymns. And the right method of that is the 'modern'.

In short, they say, the modern school of Vedic interpretation must prevail, as and in comparison with the difficult books of the Old Testament of the Bible and the Homeric poems and the remnant tradition of 'Hindu' practice in ritual, stories, mythologies, purāṇas, and at the most Sāyaṇa, with the modern rationality having the last defining word of authority over all that which is available in the Indian sources.

In this way, along with Sāyaṇa and other aids to interpretation and translation - *Nirukta* was rejected, theology was rejected, the language and interpretations of ritual were all rejected. In short the *Ārṣa* method was rejected as fiction, ritual and mythology were rejected as superstition. And since Swami Dayanand followed the *Nirukta* and the *Brāhmaṇas*, selectively though, and since he followed the grammarians and etymologists, he too was rejected, assessed and described, at best, as subjective, arbitrary, unscientific, fanciful, even wild. The reason? "His ignorance of English deprived him of much that would have been helpful to him, and would have kept him from some of his wild ideas about the Veda."[31]

And yet, for all this, according to Max Müller, Swami Dayanand was 'a remarkable man.'[32] It was he alone who held the key to his true interpretation of the Vedas and convinced his followers that the Vedas contain those secrets of nature, existence and life which the modern man of science and philosophy does not even conceive of.

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## EXAMPLES OF INTERPRETIVE ERRORS

***Some Mantras***

Let us now take up a few translations of *Ṛgveda* done by Griffith which are described as "free, independent, scientific, modern."

*Gaurīrmimāya salilāni takṣatyekapadī dvipadī sā catuṣpadī.*
*Aṣṭāpadī navapadī babhūvuṣī sahasrākṣarā parame vyoman.*[33]

*Translation by Griffith*: "Forming the water floods, the buffalo hath lowed, one footed or two footed or four footed, she, who hath become eight footed or hath got nine feet, the thousand syllable in the sublimest heaven."[34] (*The Buffalo is 1-9 footed.*)

The reader here is faced with a strange choice: If you believe this translation is correct, the mantra is unacceptable. But if you hold that the mantra cannot be as irrational as the translation shows it is, then the translation is unacceptable. The difficulty lies in the translation the word *gaurī*: Let us see what *gaurī* means:

For Griffith, in the translation, *gaurī* means 'buffalo'. Yet in his note on the mantra, he says: "...the great raincloud has thundered... *Gaurī*, the buffalo, is, according to Sāyaṇa, *Vāk*, Speech, the voice of heaven."

Griffith accepts Sāyaṇa. But Sāyaṇa's interpretation of '*Gaurī*', he has ignored. Griffith also expresses his gratefulness to Monier Williams for his *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*. Let us refer to Monier Williams for '*Gaurī*':

According to Monier Williams, *Gaurī*, grammatically, is the feminine form of *Gaura*, which means "shining, brilliant, clean, beautiful; white, yellowish, reddish, pale red." It also means "a kind of buffalo." *Gaurī* means "*Vac* or voice of the middle region of the air, 1, 164, 41, according to Nighaṇṭu, 1, 11 and *Nirukta*, 11, 40. It is also the name of several metres (4X12 syllables; another of 4X13 syllables; another of 4X26 long syllables)... *Gaurī* also means brilliant Goddess, Shiva's wife."

But in spite of Sāyaṇa, in spite of Monier William's references to Nirukta and Nighaṇṭu, in spite of '*Gaurī*' meaning "brilliant Goddess, Śiva's wife *Pārvati*," *Gaurī* for Griffith means only a *buffalo* because it is the female of *Gaura*, a he-buffalo. Every one even with a distant contact with the Vedic tradition knows that *Gaurī*, *Pārvati*, is *Śakti*, *Śabda Śakti* too, the same as *Vāk*, *the Word*, still the 'scientific interpretation' of *Gaurī* for the western interpreter is *buffalo*, howsoever funny it might appear.

As a scholar, Griffith had a choice between 'speech' and 'buffalo'. And for sure he must have been feeling, for his own translation of Ṛg. 1.164.41, the vibrations of his own interpretation of Ṛg. 1.164.39, just two verses earlier, in which he had translated *Ṛco akṣare parame vyoman* as the 'holy song of praise', using the attribute of *Vac*, "the thousand syllabled Speech (vibrating, reverberating) in the sublimest heaven." So his choice of 'Buffalo', in preference to *Vac*, in spite of himself, raises serious questions of motivation, nothing short of denigrating the sacred. Otherwise how can 'buffalo' be accepted as 'thousand syllabled' when the word 'speech' is available and self-suggested?

The reader may now consider, for appreciation and understanding, the following translation as far as possible in the language of a different culture, tradition and idiom:

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> The spirit of light, *Vāk*, in spotless white of the Word in the highest heaven of eternal Omniscience, ever keen to reveal and grow, speaks loud and bold, stirring the stillness of space in waves of consciousness in the universal mind and in the pools of the seer's mind, and thus reveals the Word in forms and stages for humanity: One Veda as the whole knowledge, two Vedas for knowledge and action, three Vedas for knowledge, action and prayer, four Vedas as one compendium of discrete forms, eightfold knowledge of four Vedas and four Upa-Vedas of practical knowledge such as health, science, military science, etc., and nine-stage knowledge, the ninth being grammar, phonetics, astronomy, etc. Indeed, this is knowledge contained in countless thousand variations of the One Imperishable Word: AUM.[35]

Let us take another mantra from Ṛgveda:

*Vardhānyam viśve marutaḥ sajoṣāḥ pacacchatam mahiṣām indra tubhyam.*
*Pūṣā viṣṇustrīṇi sarānsi dhāvanvṛtrahaṇam madiramamśumasmai.*[36]

*Griffith's translation*: "He (i.e., *Agni*) dressed a hundred buffaloes, O Indra, for thee whom all accordant *Maruts* strengthen. He, *Pūṣā Viṣṇu*, poured forth three great vessels to him, the juice that cheers, that slaughters *Vṛtra*."[37]

Like his obsession with *Gaurī* in Ṛgveda 1.164.41, Griffith's obsession here is with the verb *pac* and the noun *mahiṣām*. *Pac* is a root which, according to Monier Williams means 'to cook, bake, roast, boil, and it also means to ripen, mature, bring to perfection or completion.' *Mahiṣā*' means 'great, powerful, the sun' and also 'buffalo'. So Griffith would, rather must, in his own 'natural and scientific' style, choose the dressing, preparing and cooking of a hundred buffaloes for Indra, a 'God', the equal and cognate of Bacchus, God of the Greeks, and 'Soma', cognate of 'mead' in the 'mead hall' of the celebrating warriors of the Romans or of the Titans and Vikings whose praise is sung in the Anglo-Saxon poetry in English.

One reasonable rational version of the mantra[38] in the Indian cultural context is the following:

> Indra, O potent spirit of the cosmos, let all vibrant creative and constructive forces of nature and humanity join in unison and exalt you, ruler of the world, ripening and maturing a hundred mighty gifts of vitality in your service. May Viṣṇu, omnipresent sustaining power of universal nourishment, ever active on the move, fill the three realms of earth, heaven and the middle regions with life giving nectar of bliss and excitement for this Indra to break down the cloud of darkness, evil and want.

One interesting example of grammatical interpretation and syntactic misapplication is the following translation of Ṛgveda:

*Mayobhūrvāto abhi vātūsrā ūrjasvatīroṣadhīrā riśantām.*
*Pīvasvatīrjīvadhanyāḥ pibantvavasāya padvate rudra mṛla.*[39]

"May the wind blow fresh, delightful, exciting and blissful. Let cows feed on nourishing and energising herbs and grasses and drink abundant life giving waters. O Rudra, divine

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spirit of peace, joy and compassion, be kind and generous to the animals to provide them with ample food and water."[40]

*Griffith's*: May the wind blow upon our Cows with healing: may they eat herbage full of vigorous juices. May they drink waters rich in life and fatness: to food that moves on feet be gracious, Rudra.[41]

This translation shows that the mantra is a prayer to Rudra for invigorating wind, nourishing grass and herbs, and vitalising waters for cows. Wind, grass and herbs, and water are food for cows, and 'the cows' then are translated as 'food that moves on feet' for men. Does the translator want to show that the 'Vedic Aryans' of his imagination were beef eaters, because the waters are supposed to be "rich in life and fatness" for cows? And does he want to prove that his prayer is cognate with the following verses of the Bible:

Genesis: 8, 20: Then Noah built an altar to the Lord, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.

8, 21: And the Lord smelled a soothing aroma...

9, 1: So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them...

9, 3: Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs.

In Genesis, 1,30, it was different: "And to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food", and it was so.

But in 9, 3, After God "smelled a soothing aroma of meat" (8, 21), every moving thing is food for man. So, probably, Griffith reads the Bible in the Ṛgveda, for the misplaced, self-created reason that the Veda and the Bible are cognate and equal. This interpretation is not only irrational and incorrect; it is also arbitrary and nothing short of the motivated, amounting to desecrating the sacred.

The western translators fail to see that, in the Veda, the prayers for peace, welfare, food and freedom from fear are always for both humans and others. Take, for example, the following mantras:

Prayer for food:

*Annapate'nnasya no dehyanamīvasya śuṣmiṇaḥ.*
*Prapra dātāram tāriṣa ūrjam no dhehi dvipade catuṣpade.*[42]

"Lord of food and energy, bless us with food, nourishing, invigorating, free from pollution and pleasing to taste. Bless the giver, the yajamāna, to advance and attain fulfilment and prosperity. Give us food for energy both for humans and for the animals."[43]

Prayer for peace:

*Indro viśvasya rājati.*
*Śam no astu dvipade śam catuṣpade.*[44]

"Indra, lord of light, power and glory, rules the world. By His grace, may all be peace and joy with the humans and with the animals."[45]

Prayer for freedom from fear:

*Yato yataḥ samīhase tato no'abhayaṁ kuru.*
*Śam naḥ kuru prajābhyo'bhayam naḥ paśubhyaḥ.*[46]

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"Here, there, anywhere, wherever you initiate and inspire us, from there itself render us free and fearless. Create peace, freedom and prosperity for our people. Create peace, freedom and fearlessness for our animals. Create freedom and fearlessness for us from people and from animals."[47]

Such mantras create the cultural context of the sacred in which other mantras should be interpreted. But the westerners either ignore this point or refer to it only when it suits them. In Ṛg. 10.169.1 quoted above, the translator has foisted the Biblical content on the Veda, and utterly ignored the Vedic context.

***Some Words and Names***

Apart from subjecting the Veda-mantras to comparative and cognitive-related interpretation, they have translated certain important words in the supposed and 'created' religio-historical context. The word *devaḥ* is translated as 'Gods'. 'Dasah' (the violent ones, purely negative people) is translated as the 'dark tribes of India, as against the 'Aryas'. The entire Vedic concept of pure knowledge is thus changed to the invented history of the conflict between 'the forceful nature-worshipping 'Aryans' and the native Indian tribes of dark colour and little non-prominent nose'. This is clearly an arbitrary and motivated exercise.

Important in the western translations are 'name words' which, apparently, can, and for the westerners, do, mean particular persons, families and tribes. Of course, in later historical Sanskrit literature, i.e., the Purāṇas and *mahā-kāvyas* such as Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata, they do mean particular persons, families and places, but not in the Veda. These words in western translations are not accepted as attributes or adjectives or descriptive terms as they are intended to mean in the Vedic context. Yāska and following him, Swami Dayanand, do not accept them as proper nouns, but accept them only as attributes because, as in Max Müller's self-admitted sense too, they "retain their radical meaning."

To appreciate the distinction between Swami Dayanand's interpretation of apparently 'name words' as attributes (adjectives) and the western interpretation as particular persons, we must get clear of another problem: What is the time distance between the Veda and any other available earliest Sanskrit work after the Veda in which the same words are clearly names of persons or families? No one really knows. Even Griffith says the time distance is "absolutely unimaginable."

This raises another related question: What about the Rishis whose names are associated with the mantras. The westerners say they are the poet-composers, while Yāska says they are the interpreters. This is a sensitive issue and cannot be resolved in terms of objective history. We have studied this problem earlier. But here it may be profitably mentioned that in the case of many mantras, common to Ṛgveda, Sāmaveda, and Atharvaveda, the Rishis are different, and in certain cases they are not only different but also multiple - two, seven, eleven, even a hundred seers. So as honest and sincere readers, we have to decide for ourselves whether two, seven or a hundred poets can compose the one identical mantra or poem, or can the interpreters of the same mantra or poem be one or more individuals.

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We should also decide whether we gain more of real knowledge by interpreting the Veda in the Ārṣa manner or by interpreting it in the historical manner. Interpreted in the Ārṣa manner, the Vedas offer pure knowledge, interpreted in the historical way, they offer mere anecdotes.

We have the scriptures: Vedas which are prehistoric, and the Bible and the Qur'ān whose history is known and has been studied. And there is something very interesting in relation to the Bible which has been generally ignored:

In the Bible,[48] one finds important proper names, with their literal meaning given in footnotes. Some of them are:

*Beersheba* (Genesis, 21, 31): literally a well, dug with the oath of agreement between two parties.

*Bethel* (Genesis, 28, 19): a holy place, the house of God.

*Moses* (Exodus 2, 10): drawn out of water; name given to the baby that was drawn out of water and raised by the Pharaoh's daughter.

*Reuben* (Genesis, 29, 32): a son; name given to the son of Jacob and Leah.

*Simeon* (Genesis, 29, 33): 'heard'; name given to Leah's son for the reason that God had 'heard' her prayer for a son.

*Levi* (Genesis, 29, 34): 'attached'; name given to Leah's son, because his father felt attached to his mother after his birth.

*Esau* (Genesis, 25, 25): 'hairy'; name given to the baby Esau, because he was hairy all over.

*Edom* (Genesiss, 25, 30): the name given to the red stew from which Jacob fed Esau.

*Jacob* (Genesis, 25, 26): 'supplanter'; name given to the second of the twins after Esau.

*Esek* (Genesis, 26, 20): 'a place of quarrel'; a place where herdsmen of Gerar quarrelled with the herdsmen of Isaac.

*Sitna* (Genesis, 26, 21): another place for quarrel.

*Rehoboth* (Genesis, 26, 22): 'spaciousness'; another place where the parties agreed to stay together because it was spacious enough for all.

*Nile* (Genesis, 4, 9): Nile is described only as "the river."

In fact, almost all names are meaningful as they existed in the language, before they became proper names in, for, and after, in the Bible in certain historical situations. In the Bible, they become contextual, and because of that context, and after that historical event, they became proper nouns. Earlier they were general, common, adjectival 'name words', attributive and appellative (as Max Müller himself described the 'name words' of the Veda).

Veda, being pre-historic articulation of the reality of existence, describes no historical events. The apparent 'name words' are general expressions of ideas, types, characters, etc. They are the original source of the names of persons and places and facts of nature. Euphrates, in pre-Biblical language, literally means 'the great river'. Only later, as in the Bible, in historical situations, it became a proper noun. 'Gaṅgā', in Veda, means 'a great river'. Later in Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābhārata and Bhāgawatam, it

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becomes the name of a particular river. The 'name words' of the Vedas do not occur in a situational context. They occur only in a general context of the theme (the *devatā*) of a Sūkta. Even if an interpreter tries to imagine and invent a situation, it would always be general in the context of life itself. For pre-historic literature such as Veda, there is no parallel history, no cognate historical work, for illustration or comparison or definition.

Atharvaveda 4, 29 is a very good example of our view in human and philosophical terms if we explain 'name words' in *yaugic* terms as Swami Dayanand suggested, Zaehner supported, and exactly as Monier Williams too explained in the Introduction to his Dictionary. The *devatā* of this Sūkta is Mitra and Varuṇa (divine love and judgment, i.e., wisdom). The Sūkta is described as a poem in search of 'freedom from sin and distress'. The Rishi interpreter is *Mrgara* (the person who wants purity and freedom of the soul).

In this Sūkta, there are many words which appear to be 'names' of particular persons, but in reality, are only attributive i.e., they are general 'name words' with certain qualities of character. In commentaries also, they have been explained as attributive or appellative. It should be reiterated that even Max Müller did acknowledge that, in the Veda, words retain their radical meaning, and are still appellative, i.e., common nouns (describing certain qualities of character) rather than particular.

These words are: Drūhvan, Satyavāna, Aṅgirasa, Agasti, Jamadagni, Atri, Kaśyapa, Vasiṣṭha, Śyāvāśva, Vadhryaśva, Purumīḍha, Vimada, Saptavadhrī, Bhāradvāja, Gaviṣṭhira, Viśvāmitra, Kutsa, Kakṣivān, Kaṇva, Medhatithi, Triśoka, Uśanā Kāvya, Gotama and Mudgala.

Among the westerns too, Whitney translates *druhuvana* as 'malicious', and *stayavāna* as the 'truthful one'. The rest, he retains as proper names, although he mentions that in the commentaries *satyavāna* is taken as a proper name and also as an appellative. Then, in each situation, the choice lies with the reader and the translator. If he takes these words as proper names, the hymn is reduced to the restrictive record of mere events which have no general message for any reader. But if the reader seeks enlightenment in search of wisdom, freedom from sin and relief from distress, in situations of crisis of various kind and degree, he will do better to interpret these words as attributes and qualities of people in general. We must decide what we want from the scripture: win points of debate, or seek wisdom to live in peace and prosperity or just to learn stories of persons and certain events.

Satavalekar, a scholar of the Vedas, stands with Swami Dayanand but still retains his love for Sāyaṇa. He too explains these 'name words' as follows:

*Satyavāna*: dedicated defender and follower of truth.
*Aṅgirasa*: one who knows the prāṇic vitality of life.
*Agasti*: one who endeavours to fight sin and disease.
*Jamadāgni*: one who lights up the vital fires of life.
*Atri*: one who is always up and doing to save people from all kinds of suffering.
*Kaśhyapa*: a man of keen penetrative vision.
*Vasiṣṭha*: one who provides settlement.
*Śyāvāśva*: one who is dynamic and ever-active.
*Vadhryaśva*: a man of self-discipline and sense-control.

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*Purumīḍha*: one who is prosperous and generous.
*Vimada*: one who has conquered pride and arrogance.
*Saptavadhrī*: one who controls the seven – five senses, mind and intellect.
*Bhāradvāja*: one who is rich in food, plenty and charity.
*Gaviṣṭhira*: a man of controlled speech.
*Viśvāmitra*: a man of universal love and friendship.
*Kutsa*: a destroyer of want and negativity.
*Kakṣivān*: a dynamic man of discipline.
*Kaṇva*: one who is master of language and style.
*Medhatithi*: a man of intelligence and shrewdness.
*Triśoka*: a brilliant man of knowledge, of material, subtle and causal sources of existence.
*Uśanā kāvya*: a man of controlled poetic creativity.
*Gotama*: a sensitive seeker and master of perception and expression.
*Mudgala*: a man of happiness.

If a scripture of pre-Bible times were available, what would be the meaning of words such as moses, joshua, reuben, etc.? Rivers such as 'Nile, Jordan', meant only 'river' (Joshua, 24, 2, 3, 14, 15, and Exodus, 4, 9). The particulars in historical scriptures followed from the pre-historic and the general language of the pre-historic time. The scripture (Veda) was self-existent as the Author of that scripture was self-existent. That language was, as it still and always is, the sound correspondence of that Self-existent Consciousness, and now co-existent with the world in existence. Of that Language, no historical language can be cognate, comparable, or equal. Therefore, even though without disengaging himself from the 'modern, historical-comparative method' of scriptural interpretation, the westerner too does admit:

> But it must not be supposed that European students and interpreters of the Veda claim anything like infallibility, completeness, or finality for the results to which their researches have led them. All modern scholars will allow that many hymns are dark as the darkest oracle, that, as Professor Max Müller says, there are whole verses which, as yet, yield no sense whatever, and (there are) words the meaning of which we can only guess. As in the interpretation of the more difficult books of the Old Testament and the Homeric poems, so in the explanation of the Veda, complete success, if ever attainable, can be attained only by the labours of generations of scholars.

And they too, I am sure, will have to say: "*Neti Neti*, still more and ever more toward the Infinite!" In the finite human situation, you cannot eat the fruit of Infinity unless you become Agni or Agni becomes you.[49]

But it is one thing to say "this hymn is dark as the darkest oracle", it is another to say, "it is non-sense or too vulgar." One means the admission and recognition of human limitations, the other is the assertion of hubris.

About my own translation of the Vedas, the question has been asked of me, "Why this translation when so many are available?"

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My response is: "Because the last is impossible."

***On Your Guard: Vedas don't Sanction Animal-Slaughter***

A word of caution for those honest readers of the Veda, who are on the spiritual path as suggested by Patañjali's Aṣṭāṅga Yoga. The first step of yoga is 'Yama', social ethics, and the first prescription of 'Yama' is 'Ahinsā', love and non-violence. Yoga, in fact, is a specialised branch of Vedic discipline for self-realisation. The Vedic ideal of life is *Abhyudaya* (vibrant living for worldly success) through yajña as prescribed in the opening verse of Yajurveda, and *Niḥśreyas* (ultimate freedom of spirit) as stated in the closing verse of Yajurveda.

The Vedas describe the cow and all such other animals, the earth and the environment, woman, and speech as inviolable, never to be hurt, *aghnyāḥ* never to be violated, 'never to be killed'.

The word '*aghnyā*' is derived from the root *han* with a negative prefix *a*.

*Han* means: to touch, to strike, to beat (a drum for example), to bring, to smite, to kill, to destroy, etc.

Another root in the Vedic context is *Yaj* from which the word 'Yajña' is derived.

*Yaj* means: to worship, to join, to give. So 'Yajña' means a ritual, an activity in fact, in which people join as an assembly to worship, to give and to meet for socialisation. Yajña is described as 'the best and highest act of creativity for production and advancement in all directions, material, mental and spiritual' at the personal, social and political, i.e., organisational, levels. And yajña starts at the individual and family level as *Agnihotra*, at the socio-material level as *gomedha*, and at the organisational level as *aśva-medha*. And here arises the controversial problem raised by the medieval interpreters among the Indian community, and the western interpreters who generally followed the medieval interpreters and their own leaders of the so-called 'modern' scientific, historical-comparative' school. They interpreted *gomedha* as cow sacrifice, *aśva-medha* as horse sacrifice, and even *nara-medha* as human sacrifice. Such violence-oriented interpretation was an act of sacrilege against the sanctity of the Vedas.

To understand '*aśva-medha*', '*gomedha*' and even '*nara-medha*', we have to understand words such as '*aśva*','*go*' and '*medha*'.

*Aśva* is derived from the root *ash*, which means: to reach, come to, arrive at, get, obtain, master, pervade, etc. *Aśva*, therefore, means: horse, energy, agni, wind, light, mind, sun, moon, senses, and so many other things which move fast and by which you can reach, obtain, get, master, something you desire. It also means *Rāṣṭra*, a free republic.

*Go* means cow, senses, earth, sun-rays, speech, nature, environment, etc. Derived from the root *gam*, anything that moves is called '*gau*' or '*go*' and hence, all these meanings.

*Medha* is derived from the root *medh* which means 'to *yaj*', a joint non-violent activity of creative, productive, and progressive nature. It does not mean 'to sacrifice' in the Biblical or the Qur'ānic sense.

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Hence *gomedha* yajñā means a joint activity for the protection, development and progressive security of the earth and its environment. It also means programmes of the development of the animal wealth of the nation, and in fact that of the earth including the protection of the atmosphere against, for example, global warming. *Aśvamedha* yajñā means a joint national activity for the defence, development and progressive security, dignity and glory of the nation and the '*Rāṣṭra*', the organisational character and unity of the human nation. *Naramedha* yajña means the joint activity for the development, education, employment and progress of the human population of the country and, ultimately, of all the communities of the world.

What kind of activity is yajña? The Vedic word for the character of yajña is *adhvara*. The word *adhvara* is derived from the root *dhvri* with a negative prefix *a*. *Dhvri* means 'to injure'. So *adhvara* means 'not injuring', an activity which is free of all kinds of violence. Sacrifice is not only a bad translation of yajña, it is an incorrect translation giving a sense contradictory to yajña.[50] The person who organises a yajña is called *Adhvaryu*, that is, the organiser of an *adhvara*, a sacred activity free of violence, a yajña for all without violence.

Here it is interesting to refer to Monier Williams and his dictionary:

"*Adhvara* (from *dhvri*) not injuring... (a sacrifice, especially a soma sacrifice)."

"*Adhvaryu*, one who institutes an *Adhvara*; any officiating priest; a priest of a particular class... The *Adhvaryu* priests 'had to measure the ground, to build the altar (*vedi*), to prepare the sacrificial vessels, to fetch wood and water, to light the fire, to bring the animal and immolate it."

"*Aśvamedha*: the horse sacrifice (a celebrated ceremony, the antiquity of which reaches back to the Vedic period; the hymns 1.162.163 of the Ṛgveda... It is said that the horse was sometimes not immolated, but was kept bound during the ceremony), VS. 18.22."

He admits that the horse was perhaps not immolated. And this non-immolation (*aghnyā*) was the Vedic practice.

We come back to the inviolable animal, *aghnyā* of the opening verse of Yajurveda. The term is derived from the root *han* with a negative prefix *a*, which gives it the sense of *not to be violated*. The horse, as the cow, is not to be violated (immolated, killed) in the yajña. It has to be brought as a symbol of the *Rāṣṭra* and it was only to be touched while it was kept bound as a symbol of the *Rāṣṭra*.

*Han* means 'to touch', 'to bring', 'to smite to start' as in the case of the chariot horses, in the wedding ceremony. For example, In Ṛg. 10.85.13, in the wedding season, the bride's procession moves for the bride-groom's family, the bride's new home. The bride's father says good-bye to the procession, the oxen of the bride's chariot are smitten (*hanyante*) and made to move the chariot, but Griffith says the "oxen are slain", for the wedding season is a festive season and the festive season is celebrated, according to the scripture of Griffith's choice, with the slaughter of the "fatted calf". In the New Testament of the Bible (Luke, 15, 11-32), when the Prodigal son, after wasting all his share of the father's property, comes back to the father, the father celebrates the 'festive occasion' and says: "And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat,

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and be merry." So "In Māgha days are oxen slain, in *Arjuris* they wed the bride," says Griffith. Wilson on the other hand says "the oxen are whipped along" to start the chariot, like pressing the ignition switch to start your car. But Griffith must bring in slaughter of the oxen only in order to prove that yajña is a sacrifice, not a sacred non-violent (adhvara) ritual in honour of the God of mercy and love who protects His children like a father.[51]

Take care you don't fall a victim to motivation and mis-interpretation of the sacred Articulation of Eternal (Sanātana) Knowledge.

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43. Tulsi Ram, Prof., Tr., 2013, *Yajurveda*, Arsh Sahitya Prachar Trust, Delhi, pp. 301-302.
44. *Ibid.*, 36. 8; इन्द्रो विश्वस्य राजति। शं नो अस्तु द्विपदे शं चतुष्पदे॥
45. Tulsi Ram, Prof., Tr., 2013, *Yajurveda*, pp. 1007-1008.
46. *Ibid.*, 36. 22; यतो यतः समीहसे ततो नोऽअभयं कुरु। शं नः कुरु प्रजाभ्योऽभयं नः पशुभ्यः॥
47. Tulsi Ram, Prof., Tr., 2013, *Yajurveda*, p. 1013.
48. *Bible*, 1982, New King James Version, Thomas Nelson, Inc.
49. *Ṛgveda*, 8.44.23
50. Explaining the word *yajña*, Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi says, "The notion of sacrifice is a purely Christian notion, and has no place in Vedic philosophy. It is foreign to the genuine religion of India. Hence all translations in which the word 'sacrifice' occurs are to be rejected as fallacious." See *Works of Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi* (ed. Ram Prakash, Dr., 2013), Ghaziabad, p. 36. It so happened that Sayana, Mahidhara and the like recommended animal sacrifices in Yajñas. This concept suited the Europeans and they thus coined the term 'sacrifice' for Yajña.
51. *Ṛgveda*, 1.1.9

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# CHAPTER 23

# Veda: Its Interpretations and Maharshi Dayanand

*Satish Prakash and Surendra Kumar*

## VEDA

The term 'Veda', literally meaning knowledge, is the name given to the four Samhitā texts – the Ṛg, Yajur, Sāma and Atharva. The Veda is also known by a host of other designations. Some of them are Śruti, Chandas and Mantra. Almost all scholars agree that the Vedic knowledge is called 'Śruti' because for a long time it was only spoken and heard. Scholars acknowledge that the Vedic verses are also called Mantras and Chandas.

Prof. Max Müller claims that there is a difference between Mantra and Chandas, each belonging to a different period in the history of Vedic literature. The Vedic Age, he asserts, can be divided into four distinct periods – the Chandas, the Mantra, the Brāhmaṇa and the Sūtra – "according to the general form of the literary productions which give to each of them its peculiar historical character".[1] Dayanand however, contradicts this claim and asserts that Mantra and Chandas are synonyms. In an effort to establish the synonymous relationship between Mantra and Chandas, Dayanand first quotes Max Müller's definition of Chandas as "a type of composition which contains a common-place theme, bereft of originality, and which is only a rhapsody flowing spontaneously from the mouth of an idiot." Dayanand asserts that the learned German Professor could have propagated such a theory only because he could not understand the true meaning of words like *Hiraṇyagarbha* etc. It is on the basis of his crude understanding of such words that Max Müller is assertive of the modernity of the Mantra period.[2] The truth of the matter is, Dayanand affirms, that the words Chandas, Veda, Nigama, Mantra and Śruti are synonymous terms. Mantras are so called because they are meditated upon (from the root '*man*' – to think). One can think about and

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contemplate on abstract and abstruse concepts on the basis of the Mantras of the Veda, and thereby attain the knowledge of reality. While Mantra refers to the Veda being studied with the full application of the mental powers, Chandas too is used to designate the Veda because it covers (*chhad* to cover) all branches of learning. To prove his thesis that Mantra and Chandas mean the Veda and refer to each verse, Dayanand quotes profusely from texts like *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* and the *Manusmriti*.[3]

***Texts Constituting the Veda***

The question of which books constitute the Veda has been one of tremendous controversy. Since the time of Kātyāyana, the generally accepted feeling was that Mantras and Brāhmaṇas together constitute the Veda (*Mantra-brāhmaṇayorveda-nama-dheyam*).[4] Āpastamba also submits that the Veda is made up of the Mantras and the Brāhmaṇas. Sāyaṇa fully submits to the line of reasoning adopted by Āpastamba and the others.[5]

The generally accepted view of European Indological scholarship is represented by those like Winternitz, who writes that the term 'Veda' does not mean one single literary work... but a whole great literature, which arose in the course of many centuries, and through centuries has been handed down from generation to generation by verbal transmission..."[6] He further says that what is now called 'Veda' consists of (1) the Samhitās – collections of hymns, (2) the Brāhmaṇas – voluminous prose texts containing theological matter, and (3) Āraṇyakas and Upaniṣads – containing meditations of forest-hermits and ascetics on God and the world. In expressing such a view, Winternitz finds himself supported by scholars like Max Müller and Monier Williams.[7]

Dayanand disagrees very forcefully with Sāyaṇa and the western scholars on this question. He denies any status of Veda-hood for the Brāhmaṇas, since "they have been given the title of *Purāṇa* (mythology) and *Itihāsa* (history).[8] According to him, the Brāhmaṇas are not a part of the Veda, but related to the Veda in the form of commentaries – Brāhmaṇas and the Kalpas announced by ancient sages e.g. Brahma etc. are the commentaries upon the Vedas.[9] To prove the authenticity of this thesis, Dayanand quotes Pāṇini who himself makes a distinction between the two in his aphorisms (2.3.60-62, 4.3.105). A text as authoritative as the Mahābhāshya fully substantiates what Dayanand posits. Therein, Patañjali states clearly that the Brāhmaṇas were composed by the Rishis with an aim to explain the Vedas (5.1.1). According to Dayanand, since the Brāhmaṇas cannot be regarded as being at par with the Vedas, and the Brāhmaṇas can be credited with only an authority that is secondary to that of the Vedas.[10]

***The Equal Importance of Each of the Four Vedas***

Sāyaṇa posits that the Yajurveda enjoys a position of importance and superiority over the Ṛgveda, for which reason he saw the necessity of writing a commentary first on the Yajurveda.[11] In his estimation, the Yajurveda has its connection with the *Adhvaryu* priest (one of the four priests appointed for the performance and successful completion of a sacrifice), and the *Adhvaryu* is comparable to being the body of the sacrifice, hence he is

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the most important among the four. The Ṛg and Sāma Vedas are to be made use of principally for recital and singing, both of which form important and integral parts of the sum-totality of the sacrifice.

Max Müller observes that "the name of Veda is commonly given to four collections of hymns, which are respectively known by the names of Ṛgveda, Yajurveda, Sāmaveda, and Atharvaveda."[12] After this, however, Max Müller makes a very curious statement, that of these four Vedas, only one is important and real – the Ṛgveda – while the others are so-called Vedas, and they hardly deserve the name, since they chiefly contain extracts from the Ṛgveda, along with sacrificial formulas, charms and incantations, many of which would interest only the Sanskrit scholars by profession.[13] Weber does not differ from Max Müller when he says that the *ṛcās* of the Yajus and the Sāma are only an alteration in part of the Ṛg Samhitā.[14]

Dayanand's assertions are in complete contradistinction to those propounded by Sāyaṇa and the European scholars. He states emphatically that there are indeed four Vedas, each possessing its own purpose and function. The order in which the Vedas have been traditionally enumerated also finds justification from Dayanand. He theorises that the four Vedas focus on, knowledge, its application, the relationship between the two and finally the preservation and development of knowledge. The qualities and properties of objects have been defined and brought to light in the Ṛgveda, while in the Yajurveda one finds presented the rules whereby one can practically make use of the knowledge of the qualities of objects. The Sāmaveda provides the basis whereby one can establish the mutual relationship between knowledge and application (action), while the Atharvaveda gives due fulfilment to the final results of knowledge imparted in the three Vedas. Thus the preservation and development of the sciences (culled from the three Vedas) are the functions of the Atharvaveda.

This is one way whereby we can rationalise the existence of the four Vedas. One other purpose of the four Samhitās is to have the Mantras which deal with various branches of learning arranged in an order which is in consonance with their contextual reference and their relation with the preceding and succeeding stanzas so that the sciences may be described cohesively. And the purpose of having each Veda further divided into aṣṭakas, maṇḍalas, adhyāyas, sūktas etc. is only to facilitate quick reference for purposes of studying and teaching.[15]

### *The Purpose of the Veda*

Sāyaṇa expressly states that the purpose of the Veda becomes fulfilled in being recited while the performances of various sacrifices are in progress.[16] The Ṛgveda serves the purpose of brahmayajña and jāpa, while the Yajurveda serves the purpose of being recited in the various rituals. Max Müller chose to perceive the importance of the Vedas more from a historical and anthropological point of view.[17] Dayanand affirms a completely different purpose of the Veda. According to him the Veda contains the seeds of all true knowledge and the purpose of the Veda is not its recital in rituals, but to provide the basis whereby one can research into the existence and purpose of the things of the world, in addition to one's own self and God.[18]

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***The Need for Interpreting the Veda***

In the earliest period of human history, the sages understood the Vedas in a most natural way, because it was knowledge revealed unto them. As Griffith points out, these Rishis were "inspired seers who saw or received them by sight directly from the Creator".[19] Yāska, in his famous work Nirukta, testifies this fact that the sages had direct intuitive insight and by oral instruction handed down the hymns and their purports to later generations who were destitute of this direct intuitive insight that they had possessed.[20] It is safe to deduce, therefore, that in that period, there was no need for exegetical literature of human authorship, since in the Samhitā period, the Vedic terminology was popularly known and the spoken language was not very different from it.[21] However, with the passage of time, Yāska further testifies, when the later generations began declining in their capacity to understand the imports of the Vedas through oral communication, the Rishis had to resort to compiling works of interpretation so as to preserve intact for humanity the texts and their meanings.[22] One should also note that, as the linguists like Max Müller point out, no society remains static, as a result of which the language the society uses does not remain unchanged.[23] One can naturally expect, therefore, that one reason for people declining in their capacity to understand the Vedic mantras in the post-Samhitā period, was the fact that the language of their times moved further and further away from the Vedic Sanskrit, as a result of which they could not retain the capacity in themselves to understand an older language which was "highly developed, polished and often figurative",[24] and which was "distinguished by refinement and beauty of thought."[25] Hence, there was a need for exegetical literature.

## VARIOUS SCHOOLS OF VEDIC INTERPRETATION

From a cursory reading of the Nirukta, it can be gathered that the science of Vedic exegesis had exercised the minds of scholars not only in the time of Yāska, but even in the period prior to him. It seems that the Vedas were read with the greatest care, and scholars, involved in deciphering their meanings, started to be at variance with each other when it came to decide in favour of one definitive meaning and sense of a particular word of verse. Even though modern scholars do not possess records of the efforts made by scholars of the pre-Yāska era in the field of Vedic interpretation, yet we can arrive at some definitive conclusions regarding the various schools of interpretation from the information provided by Yāska in his Nirukta. The following are the major schools of Vedic interpretation:

***The Yajñika School***

This school seeks to interpret the mantras of the Vedas on the basis of their liturgical applications. It is the most ancient and predominant school, since it enjoys a long and uninterrupted tradition. Since ancient times, the Vedas have been committed to memory and recited as a form of worship. At a very early stage in the development of Vedic religion, the performance of the fire-ritual for the purification of the atmosphere was accompanied by the recitation of Vedic verses. In fact, so important was the

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recitation of Vedic verses that the Gopatha and Aitareya Brāhmaṇas express the belief that if a sacrificial act is accompanied with the recitation of a Vedic verse, the sacrifice is led to fulfilment.[26] Ram Gopal observes that "the tendency to employ Vedic mantras in the performance of all sorts of rituals unconnected with them reached its culmination in the time of the Kalpa Sūtras."[27] The authors of these ritualistic manuals, the Kalpa Sūtras, invariably prescribed Mantras to be recited in rituals without exercising care to determine whether or not the primary meaning of the verse had any connection with the particular act. This was the cause for "a biased and incorrect interpretation of the Vedic Mantras."[28] Several commentators conformed to the standards of the Yajñika school, among whom Sāyaṇa, Mahīdhara, Uvvaṭa and Wilson are worthy of mention.

### *The Aitihāsika School*

This school insists that each Vedic hymn is related to an *Itihāsa*, i.e., a traditional account of ancient events, and interprets the hymns accordingly. Bhumananda Saraswati observes that the names of great men and kings in India have, from the earliest times, conformed to Vedic words, making it simple for Vedic expounders of the *Aitihāsika* school to explain away the sense of certain names occurring in the Vedic hymns, by relating them to events in the lives of such historical personages.[29] An example of the historical approach adopted by the *Aitihāsikas* in their interpretation of a hymn is recorded by Yāska who relates one of their legends before attempting to comment on the fifth mantra of the thirty-third sūkta of third maṇḍala of the Ṛgveda. The legend says: The seer Vishvamitra was the domestic priest of Sudāsa, the son of Paijavana. Having gathered his wealth, the priest came to the confluence of the rivers, Sutlej and Bias. Others followed him there and Viśvamitra, implored the rivers to become fordable, while pronouncing the mantra – Stop your course for a moment, ye great floods, at my friendly bidding. I, the son of Kushika, and desirous of protection, invoke the river with a sublime hymn.[30]

In Vedic and post-Vedic literature, one comes across many such legends which come together to make up the basis of the *Aitihāsika* School of Vedic Interpretation. Most worthy of mention are the legends of Indra and Vṛtra, Agastya and Lopamudrā, Viśvamitra and Śakti, Yama and Yamī, Sarama and Paṇi, Urvaśī and Pururavas, Nahuṣa and Saraswati, Devāpi and Śāntanu, Prajāpati and his daughter, Sudāsa Paijavana, and Apālā. The Brāhmaṇas, the Kṛṣṇa Yajurveda Samhitā, the Bṛhad-devatā and the Sarvāṇukramani abound in the free use of these Ākhyānas (legends). Ram Gopal does feel that the Aitihāsika School has not made a contribution to Vedic exegesis worthy of much emulation. On the contrary he feels, if the historical method were to be blindly followed, "it is likely to deflect an interpreter from making an unbiased and correct approach to the Vedas."[31] As Bhumananda observes, the *Aitihāsika* School lost its influence in the course of time, since people were more led into attaching greater importance to the historical illustration than to the Vedic truth itself.[32]

### *The Nairukta School*

The Nairuktas are credited with having made the first systematic attempt to interpret the Vedas. Their method was pre-eminently philological and etymological, as in their

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attempt to explain Vedic words, they insisted upon enquiring into the origins of speech. The beginnings of this etymological approach may be traced to the Brāhmaṇas in which the derivation of certain words has been attempted. It has come down to us in the Nirukta of Yāska, who is generally regarded as the last and the best representative of the Nairukta School of Vedic interpretation. Yāska himself declares that this science of etymology is the complement of grammar. On the basis of this statement, scholars are undivided in the view that several generations of grammarians, lexicographers and etymologists must have existed in the long period extending from the age of the Brāhmaṇas to the time just before Yāska. Yāska mentions the names of several proponents of the science of etymology, some of which are *Aupamanyava, Śākapūṇi, Gālava, Maudgalya, Āgrāyaṇa, Kāṭhakya, Krausṭuki, Aurṇavābha, Gārgya,* and *Śākaṭāyana.* It is noteworthy that the Nairukta School enjoys greater credit than the other schools mentioned so far because etymology has not remained, over the several ages, an isolated branch of study, but has acquired a status of one of the *aṅgas* of Vedic study.

The fundamental notion propounded by the Nairuktas about language is that all words can be reduced to their primordial elements which are called roots.[33] With this idea, Yāska lays great emphasis on the point that, as every word can be traced to an original root, an interpreter should never give up a word as un-derivable. This establishes for the etymological school of Vedic interpretation, an intrinsic merit. The Vedic language, as seen by all scholars, is highly developed, and many words are used metaphorically. The correct etymology of a word in the Vedas, therefore, would prove a major help in distinguishing the original radical meaning of a word from its conventional meaning. It is on the basis of this intrinsic value that Bhumananda classifies the etymological approach to Vedic interpretation as the only one yielding intelligible meanings.[34]

The Yajñika, the Aitihāsika and the Nairukta are the three major schools of Vedic interpretation. However, some other minor systems existed in ancient India that deserve mention. First among these is the *Parivrājaka* or Mystic school, mentioned by Yāska in his Nirukta (2.8), which regards all the Mantras of the Veda to convey ideas related to philosophy and mysticism. This school has a long history and a traditional base. After this, Yāska mentions the Naidana school (6.9; 7.12). The Nidanas were those who were well versed in the Vedic meters. According to Lakshman Sarup who translates Yāska's text as contained in the Nirukta (7.12), this school resembles the historical school. As it was not possible to find historical examples to explain the whole body of statements, scholars resorted to folklore and to inventing stories to exemplify Vedic truths. Like that of the historical school, it was a rather attractive method for the lay persons.[35] Yāska has also mentioned the Vaiyākaraṇa school (13.9). There is also the scientific method of interpretation which seeks to identify Vedic truths with natural phenomena and explaining them as physical-scientific truths. This method, though difficult and abstruse, is very frequently resorted to by all scholars. As in many cases, it is the only process that yields the right meaning.[36]

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## BRIEF HISTORY OF VEDIC INTERPRETATION

### *The Early Phase*

The first attempt to preserve intact, the originally intended meanings of the Vedic words, was made by the authors of the various *Pada-pāṭhas* or word-texts. In these, the Rishis sought to separate each word of the Samhitā-texts, breaking up the euphonic combinations. For this, the authors had to be proficient in the use of grammar and etymology, which in fact, they were, since one can see that the word-text of the verses are presented in a complete grammatical analysis.[37] These word-texts were aimed not only at preserving the sanctity of the Vedic texts but also at making them clear and lucid by explaining the compounds or by showing the position of the accent on individual words and by inserting the avagraha sign in compound words. These texts (*Pāṭhas*) were of eleven types, called Samhitā, Pada, Krama, Jatā, Mālā, Śikhā, Rekhā, Dhvaja, Daṇḍa, Ratha and Ghana. Macdonell observes that in preparing these word-texts, the Rishis displayed a faithfulness unique in history.[38] All these texts (*Pāṭhas*) are based on word-text (*Pada-Pāṭha*). Shakalya and Gargya are the known principal authors of Vedic word-texts (*Pada-Pāṭhas*).

After the texts (*Pāṭhas*) came the various diverging recensions (*Śākhās*) of the Vedas. Dayanand submits that there are 1127 such recensions and that these are explanatory of the Vedic imports.[39] They explain obscure words of the Samhitās by substituting simpler words in different recensions differently. For instance, *sacividam sakhāyam*[40] has been modified as *sakhividam sakhāyam* in the Taittiriyārnyaka.[41] Again, *bhrātṛvyasya vadhāya*[42] has been explained as *dvishato vadhāya* in the Kaṇva recension (1.6.2.3). Several such instances can be pointed out where the Śākhās are explanatory of the difficult parts of the Samhitā texts.

The Brāhmaṇa-texts come third in the enumeration of exegetical Vedic literature written by the ancient Rishis. Winternitz understands the Brāhmaṇas to be explanations or utterances of learned priests (Brāhmaṇs), who were doctors of the science of sacrifice, upon points of ritual.[43] Their object is to connect the Mantras with the sacrificial rites by pointing out, on one hand, their direct mutual relation, and, on the other, their symbolic connection with each other.[44] In fulfilling this two-fold objective, they describe several rituals, and speculate as to the meaning and effect of reciting particular Mantras and metres.[45] According to Dayanand these Brāhamaṇas are the lectures or compositions on the Vedas written by sages such as Brahmā.[46] They abound in synonymous references and etymological explanations of seemingly abstruse, ambiguous and multi-significant words of the Vedic texts. The huge mass of explanatory material found in the Brāhmaṇas has proven to be of tremendous help in the field of Vedic exegesis.

### *Yāska and his Nirukta*

Yāska's Nirukta, is the first available systematic work in the field of Vedic exegesis. One can indeed make a passing reference to the *Prātiśākhyas*, and the *Aṇukramaṇis* for the purpose they served in preserving the correct text and orthography of the Vedas; but they relate less to the question of regular interpretation. The Nighaṇṭu and the Nirukta

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are more exegetical in nature. The Nighaṇṭu is a lexicon, a traditional list made up of five books, of which the first three contain synonyms; the fourth, a list of especially difficult Vedic words; and the fifth, a classification of the various *devatās* that figure in the Veda. The Nirukta is a commentary on the Nighaṇṭu. It consists of fourteen chapters, and is reckoned among the Vedāṅgas, together with the texts on Phonetics, Prosody, Astronomy, Ritual and Grammar – these six being regarded as fundamental to a thorough study of the Vedas. By writing his commentary, Yāska embodied the etymological lexicography of Vedic terms in one separate work, and this represented the first distinct attempt to interpret the Vedic texts. For explanations of old Vedic words, for etymologies and synonymous expressions, the Nirukta occupies a position of importance second only to the Brāhmaṇas.[47]

***Pre-Sāyaṇa Commentators***

After Yāska, and before the beginning of the 14th century came a host of commentators of the Vedas among whom the principal ones were Skanda Swami, Udgītha, Uvvaṭa and Venkaṭamādhava.

***Skanda Swami***

Skanda Swami (630 A.D.)[48] wrote a commentary on the Ṛgveda, following the methods of interpretation delineated by Yāska. Only some parts of this commentary are available. He followed the Nairukta or Yaskīya school of Vedic interpretation but could not ignore the ritualistic explanations of the Mantras. However, as Ram Gopal observes, he does not stress on it to the extent that Sāyaṇa does.[49]

***Udgītha***

Udgītha was a contemporary and an associate of Skanda Swami. Like Skanda Swami he also followed the Yaskīya school of Vedic interpretation and penned a commentary on the Ṛgveda, the whole of which is not available.

***Nārāyaṇa***

Nārāyaṇa is also said to be an associate of Skanda Swami.[50] He too wrote a Ṛgbhāshya which has not so far come to light. His son, Nārāyaṇa Mādhava, of the seventh century wrote a commentary on the Sāmaveda which is known as Mādhavīya-vivaraṇa. This vivaraṇa has an important place in the commentaries of Sāmaveda.

***Veṇkaṭa Mādhava***

Veṇkaṭa Mādhava of the tenth century[51] was son of Veṇkaṭa. He followed the school of liturgical applications, and wrote a complete commentary on the Ṛgveda.

***Uvvaṭa***

Uvvaṭa (11th Century) wrote a commentary on the Śukla Yajurveda, describing fully the ceremonials belonging to each verse. This is an earliest available commentary on the Mādhyandina-Śākhā of Śukla Yajurveda. Even though this commentary is ritualistic in

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its approach, it also attempts other methods of interpretations such as Mystic and Aitihāsika.[52]

***Sāyaṇa***

The most important contribution to the field of Vedic interpretation, after Yāska, came from the pen of Acharya Sāyaṇa in the fourteenth century. A great scholar and the Prime Minister in the court of the King of Vijayanagar, Sāyaṇa wrote, or perhaps directed the writing of, commentaries on the four Vedas and many other works of Vedic literature. For each of the Vedas, he wrote a Bhāshya-Bhūmikā (Introduction to the commentary) in which he outlined the guiding-principles of his commentary. The commentator paraphrased each and every word of the text, providing numerous grammatical explanations and etymological derivations of obscure words. In dealing with each mantra, he has, like Uvvaṭa, described at length the liturgical connections thereof. In fact, he openly declared that the Vedas have no purpose other than sacrifice, and this has caused his commentary, huge as it is, to suffer from several limitations.[53]

***Mahīdhara***

Mahīdhara (16th Century) a native of Kashi wrote a commentary on Mādhyandina-Śākhā of the Śukla Yajurveda. This commentary not only has the ritualistic approach of Uvvaṭa, but has in fact largely drawn upon the Uvvaṭa-Bhāsya. Ram Gopal observes that "Although Mahīdhara has derived considerable help from the commentaries of Uvvaṭa and Sāyaṇa, yet Mahīdhara's commentary is not devoid of originality."[54]

***European Commentators***

As per the information available, the first ever attempt by Europeans to understand something about the Vedas was made in 1805 by Henry Thomas Colebrooke who had entered the Court at Fort William in Calcutta in 1782. His essay "On the Vedas" was the first text by a European to give definite and reliable information about the sacred books of the Indians. It was not until the year 1838 when Friedrich Rosen published in London the first Aṣṭaka of the Ṛgveda that the actual investigation of the contents of the Vedas began. This study, however, was one connected with Philology. Sometime later, a French Orientalist, Eug´ne Burnouf, gathered round him a group of his own pupils and laid the foundation for the systematic study of Vedic literature. One of those pupils was Rudolph Von Roth whose book "Zur Litteratur und Gaschichte des Weda" (On the Literature and History of the Veda) was published in 1846. Another such pupil was Fredrich Max Müller who, after much labour, published a six-volume edition of the hymns of the Ṛgveda with Sāyaṇa's commentary. It appeared in the years 1849 to 1875. However, before this was completed, Theodor Aufrecht had rendered invaluable help to the task of investigating the Vedas by publishing a handy edition of the complete text of the hymns of the Ṛgveda (1861-1863). The "Sanskrit Wörterbuch" (Sanskrit Dictionary) compiled by Otto von Böhtlingk and Rudolph Roth and published in seven volumes between the years 1852 and 1875, was called by the great St. Petersburg Lexicon, not only a brilliant monument to German industry in the field of Vedic

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interpretation but also a powerful lever for progress in this field. The following books on the Vedas resulting from European Indological scholarship may be mentioned:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| H.H. Wilson | - | Ṛgveda Samhitā, A collection of ancient Hindu hymns |
| R.T.H. Griffith | - | Translation of the Hymns of the four Vedas |
| W.D. Whitney | - | Translation of the Atharvaveda |
| Max Müller | - | Vedic Hymns |
| Hermann Oldenberg | - | Vedic Hymns |
| Maurice Bloomfield | - | The Religion of the Veda |
| A.A. Macdonell | - | A Vedic Reader for Students |
| W.D. Whitney | - | Atharvaveda Samhitā |

## THE PROBLEM OF VEDIC INTERPRETATION PRIOR TO DAYANAND'S ADVENT

Before the arrival of the Europeans in India, the method of Vedic interpretation adopted by Sāyaṇa in his elaborate commentaries held sway on the minds of native Sanskrit scholars. For them, the ritualistic interpretation of the Veda was authoritative and final. With the arrival of the Europeans in the field, one saw for the first time the industry and discipline of people of an alien culture busy with the task of deciphering thoughts couched in an ancient language not fully known either to them or even to those who lived in India. "The ancient scripture was delivered over to a scholarship laborious, bold in speculation, ingenious in its flights of fancy, conscientious according to its own lights, but ill-fitted to understand the method of the mystic poets."[55] And while looking around for help to understand these hymns, some of these Indologists came to the strong conclusion that "Sāyaṇa must have been in possession of all the interpretations which had been perpetuated by traditional teaching from the earliest times,"[56] and that without this information that Sāyaṇa possessed, without his method of explaining the obscurest text, they would have still been standing at the outer doors of Vedic interpretation.[57] Satya Prakash Saraswati, in his introduction to Ṛgveda Samhitā observes that the ritualism therefore, which Sāyaṇa certified as being part of divine knowledge and as endowed with miraculous efficacy, provided European scholarship the base for them to see in the Vedic verses, among other things, elaborations of old savage propitiatory sacrifices which the Vedic Aryans performed to appease imaginary superhuman personalities who might be benevolent or malevolent according to as they were worshipped or neglected.[58] These scholars were encouraged to understand the Vedas as a "hymnal of an early, primitive and largely barbaric society, crude in its moral and religious conceptions, and rude in its outlook upon the world that environed it."[59]

Max Müller is representative of European Indological scholarship, and his views on the Vedas are, in the main, identical with the views entertained by that foreign scholarship. Reacting to the Indian traditional view that the Veda is a revelation, Max Müller argues that there is nothing of substance in the hymns themselves to warrant such an extravagant theory,[60] since "large numbers of the Vedic hymns are childish in the extreme: tedious, low, commonplace – all making up much "rubbish."[61] The only Veda he would care to recognise is the Ṛgveda, "which in the eyes of the historical student is the Veda par excellence,"[62] while the "the other so-called Vedas, which

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deserve the name of Veda no more than the Talmud deserves the name of Bible, contain chiefly extracts from the Ṛgveda..."[63] He, however, admits that the Veda fills a gap in the history of the human mind, and that it promises to bring historians nearer than any other work to the first beginnings of Aryan language and Aryan thought.[64] He sees the hymns of the Veda as supplying vital information that will explain "how the Persians came to worship Ormuzd, how the Buddhists came to protest against temples and sacrifices, how Zeus and the Olympian gods came to be what they are in the mind of Homer, or how such beings as Jupiter and Mars came to be worshipped by the Italian peasant..."[65] Without any fear of being contradicted, Max Müller ventures to say that there exists no literary relic other than the Veda that carries historians back to a more primitive and more child-like state in the history of man.[66] The Brāhmaṇa-texts, he feels, though nearest in time to the hymns of the Ṛgveda, indulge in the most frivolous and ill-judged interpretations. The authors of these Brāhmaṇas were blinded by theology, while those of the Niruktas were deceived by theological fictions, and "both conspired to mislead by their authority, the later and more sensible commentators such as Sāyaṇa."[67] Max Müller credits Sāyaṇa as being the most sober among the native commentators, but "his scholastic notions would never allow him to accept the free interpretation which a comparative study of these venerable documents forces upon an unprejudiced scholar."[68]

Unlike Max Müller and Wilson, Roth, did not sustain much sympathy and regard for the work of medieval Vedic commentators. While accepting them as being the best guides for the branches of Vedic literature dealing with theology and worship, he argues that the task of interpreting the ancient collection of Vedic hymns demands of one to have a greater breadth of view and of historical intuitions – something which the native commentators did not possess, since, in India, no one has ever had any conception of historical development. "The very qualities which have made those commentators excellent guides to an understanding of the theological treatises render them unsuitable conductors on that far older and quite differently circumstanced domain."[69] Roth pointed out, and very rightly too, that the native commentators knew only the classical Sanskrit and they "sought its ordinary idiom in the Vedic hymns also", as a result of which European scholarship could not seek to arrive at an understanding of the Veda that was current in India in the middle ages. The task of European scholars should be to "search out the sense which the poets themselves have put into their hymns and utterances."[70]

How far the Europeans considered successful their own efforts and those of Sāyaṇa at translating the Vedas is another aspect of the problem worth considering. Before the advent of Dayanand in the field of Vedic interpretation, the only tangible effort after Sāyaṇa towards understanding the Veda came from the pen of the Europeans. Griffith, in the Preface to his translation of the Ṛgveda, comments: "It must not be supposed that European students and interpreters of the Veda claim anything like infallibility, completeness, or finality for the results to which their researches have led them... In the explanation of the Veda complete success, if ever attainable, can be attained only by the labours of generations of scholars."[71] Roth, despite the volume of his lexical labours, was honest to admit that a real translation of the Veda belonged to

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the next generation of Sanskrit scholars, and to the next century.[72] Max Müller, even though he showed much sympathy and appreciation for Sāyaṇa's translations, admits that at times, it is quite impossible to follow him, since his translation is absurd.[73] Even Wilson, who paraphrased Sāyaṇa, points out in his notes that he "occasionally failed to find Sāyaṇa a perfectly satisfactory guide, and at other times found that "the scholiast is evidently puzzled." Even Griffith talks about "Sāyaṇa's absolutely worthless paraphrase."[74] About his own efforts and those of his contemporaries, Max Müller admits that with the exception of a few hymns, "the whole world of Vedic ideas is so entirely beyond our own intellectual horizon, that instead of translating, we can as yet only guess and combine..."[75]

The ideas contained in the foregoing paragraphs reveal that, prior to Dayanand's advent, the problem of Vedic interpretation had indeed assumed serious proportions. All attempts to translate and interpret the Vedas had met with several insoluble difficulties, more so since the Vedic language abounds in ancient forms and words which do not appear in the later Sanskrit, and also because there is present in it a mass of words, found also in Classical Sanskrit, which admit of significances other than those admissible in the later tongue. Despite their methods of scientific analysis, the efforts of the Europeans have not measured up to popular expectations. Aurobindo testifies that both Sāyaṇa and the European commentators "present one characteristic in common - the extraordinary incoherence and poverty of sense which their results stamp upon the ancient hymns." In dealing with the text, they were "obliged to substitute for interpretation a process almost of fabrication." He further feels that they were "not so much revealing the sense as hammering and forging rebellious material into some sort of shape and consistence."[76]

## DAYANAND'S PRE-SUPPOSITIONS AND HIS PROJECTED COMMENTARY

Dayanand's entry into the field of Vedic Interpretation, amidst the atmosphere of utter confusion and loss of direction prevailing therein, caused a completely different approach to the problem. First of all, unlike the Europeans, Dayanand was of the firm conviction that the Veda is indeed revelationary in character, and in such an understanding, he was constantly uncompromising. A revealed knowledge, in Dayanand's conception, must of necessity be reflective of the sum-totality of knowledge. In other words, if one accepts that the Veda is indeed the knowledge revealed by God for the benefit of all humankind, then one has to accept also that it contains, at least in germinal form, all true knowledge comprehending the various arts and sciences necessary for humans to achieve the goals of comfort and happiness. In holding such a view, Dayanand establishes himself as radically different from Sāyaṇa who, despite accepting the Vedas as being revealed, declares that they have no purpose other than that of being recited at sacrifices.[77]

In the matter of tackling the words of the Vedic language, Dayanand concurs with the approach adopted by the Nairukta school ably represented by Yāska, and has vigorously attacked Max Müller and the others who had ridiculed the Niruktākāras and Brāhmaṇakāras. No Vedic hymn can be studded with historical data, considering the

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fact that the process of revelation took place before the beginnings of human history. This very fact of Divine revelation would throw overboard the concept of the Rishis being the composers of the Vedic Mantras. These Rishis to whom the Mantras are ascribed are only those seers who contemplated upon and thereafter realised the profoundest imports of these verses, subsequent to the time they were revealed. Further, the Devatā of a hymn is nothing more than the actual subject-matter thereof, and does not refer to any god, fetish or deity praised therein. It follows, then, that Max Müller's claim of the Veda affirming Polytheism or Kathenotheism is totally unfounded and untenable.

Dayanand's pre-suppositions were unheard of in his times, at least as far as his critics were concerned, but he, himself saw nothing new in them since they were propounded by the ancient Rishis and was firmly decided in his mind that these would guide him while writing his commentary on the Veda. "I have to bring to light only what was written by the ancient scholars, i.e., by the learned men of great antiquity."[78] He enumerated those works he would rely on while deciphering obscure Vedic words as follows: the Brāhmaṇas and other such works of the Rishis ranging from Brahmā to Jaimini, the Aṅgas written by Pāṇini and others, the six Darśanas and the Upavedas. It was Dayanand's considered opinion that a true interpretation of the Vedas could be possible only on the basis of the collective evidence provided in these texts, and anything outside their scope immediately becomes arbitrary and unauthentic.[79] It becomes obligatory, therefore, for a potential commentator to either himself make an in-depth study of these texts or have himself instructed by one adept at them.[80]

A study of the commentaries penned by medieval Indian and modern European scholars convinced Dayanand of the "disastrous mischief"[81] caused, since these were written with "unrestricted self-interest."[82] Dayanand envisaged it his sacred duty to bring to light in his Bhāshya the errors of these other commentators, so that the false commentaries would be conclusively rejected by all those who could honestly and intelligently compare his commentary with those penned by his predecessors.[83] For example, the commentary written by Mahīdhara on some portions of the Yajurveda is so obscene that cannot be reproduced even in the semi-obscure language of learned people.[84] Dayanand honestly felt the need for a critical evaluation of the work of Sāyaṇa, Mahīdhara and others to ascertain the "miserable condition and false position" reflected therein. He hoped that with a study of his Bhāshya, people would be convinced that the Vedas do contain all sciences and that there is nothing naive, tedious and low in them.

Dayanand's approach to the Vedas is summarised by Aurobindo in the following words:

> Dayanand's interpretation of the hymns is governed by the ideas that the Vedas are a plenary revelation of religious, ethical and scientific truth... By a true understanding of the sense of the Vedas, we could arrive at all the scientific truths which have been discovered by modern research.[85]

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Dayanand's pre-suppositions respecting the Vedas have been clearly outlined in his *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā*, which is an introduction to his commentary to Ṛg and other Vedas. Before attempting the Bhāshya proper, Dayanand had prepared two specimens of his Vedabhāshya and had them sent to various scholars at Banaras, Calcutta and elsewhere, and also to Growse and Griffith, for their comments. Among the reactions that surfaced, that of Pandit Maheshchandra Nyayaratna, Principal of the Sanskrit College of Calcutta, was most notable. He had raised several objections to the bases of Dayanand's Bhāshya.[86] Even Max Müller seriously felt that Dayanand was overvaluing the Veda and "interpreting it as it was never meant to be interpreted", that the Swami's "labour on the Veda" is nothing but "a painful instance" of such overvaluing. He chided Dayanand for attempting to discover in the Mantras "steam-engines and electricity and European philosophy and morality", that in doing so, he was only depriving the text of its true character and destroying its real value.[87] Faced with such vigorous and even hostile criticism of the two specimens of his Vedabhāshya, Dayanand considered it indispensable to set out in the clearest possible terms the fundamental pre-suppositions and principles of interpretation that would guide him while penning his commentary. These ideas are spelt out in his *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā*, which made an attempt to explain the traditional Indian view originated by the Rishis in respect of the Vedas.

Dayanand's Vedabhāshya is regarded by scholars as *bṛhat-tama* – the most important among his publications, while his Bhūmikā embodies the fundamental principles on which his Vedabhāshya is based. Importantly, if these principles are proven correct, authentic and logical, and if they are thought by scholars to be indeed supported by valid proofs, then the whole of the Dayanand's Vedabhāshya automatically withstands the test of credibility, thereby establishing its own authenticity.[88]

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# CHAPTER 24

# Maharshi Dayanand and Vedabhāshya

*Surya Devi Chaturveda*

At the time when Maharshi Dayanand embarked upon his mission of spreading the message of Veda and dharma, people had been highly influenced by centuries of mis-information by the priestly class. The problem was further compounded by the education-system initiated by the British government. They were being led to believe that the Vedas were devoid of reasonable meaning, and the other scriptures in line with the ancient Vedic tradition were worthless too. The only apparent purpose of the Vedas and the scriptures, was their use in the performance of rituals (*karmakāṇḍa*), thus providing the caste Brahmans with a livelihood and social status. This was the general impression among the common people and the scholars alike, based on the interpretations by the Western commentators like Max Müller who had failed to comprehend the true meaning of the mantras and the Indian commentators such as Sāyaṇa who had mostly explained the Veda mantras with a ritualistic sacrificial interpretation (*adhiyajña prakriyā*). Both sets of commentators had neglected various schools of interpretation initiated by ancient preceptors, and had created a faulty understanding and image of the Vedas and other scriptures.

The people were unable to understand that the Vedas are a repository of knowledge related to codes of conduct, family, society, country, the praise of God, devotion and such other duties. Straying away from the worship of one God, the people had started worshipping countless fictitious gods, goddesses and other deities. They had also begun following practices like bathing in the Ganga, performing pilgrimage, *vratas*, and *pūjās*, as the means of salvation. An influential section of the society was involved in advocating Vedic sanction for idol worship, worshipping of planets, caste system based on birth, practice of *satī*, rituals performed for the dead and incarnation of God and so on. Practices like human and animal sacrifices and consumption of meat were

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considered to have been approved by the Vedas. The religious folk were not only misinterpreting the Veda mantras in support of their sects, but were also creating much confusion about the Vedic texts. To them, the term Veda also included Brāhmaṇas,[1] Āraṇyakas, Nyāya, Mīmānsā[2] and the six Vedāṅgas.[3]

In such a milieu of the 19th century, Maharshi Dayanand was the first modern visionary who declared that the Vedas are the basis of all true knowledge and teachings. To propagate his message, he took it as an important task of his life to undertake a commentary on the Vedas, and to dispel the confusion created by the various incorrect commentaries. In his commentary, he stated that God is One, the Vedas are eternal and contain eternal knowledge related to life and God. He established that the term Veda stands for the four mantra samhitās only and not for the works like Brāhmaṇas and Āraṇyakas etc; the Vedas do not contain the history of any historical person, family, caste or place; and that all the Vedic words have a derivative as well as etymological (*yaugika* and *yogarurha*) meaning, and hence provide information about the eternal things only. He asserted that the Vedas are self-evident requiring no external proof; and are the sources of all true knowledge. Dayanand affirmed that the Vedas embody facts which are (i) *ādhyātmika* i.e., related to mind and body, (ii) *ādhidaivika* i.e., related to natural elements, (iii) *adhiyajña* i.e., concerned with yajñik practices and (iv) *vyāvahārika* i.e., concerning practical behaviour of the individual and the society. The noble thinking process of the great seer can be seen through his works viz. *Catur-veda Visya Sūcī* (Subject contents of the four Vedas), *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā* and Vedabhāshyas. His commentary on the Vedas is based on the true etymological principles of ancient seers. It is radically different from the meanings arrived at in the commentaries of Uvvaṭa, Mahīdhara and Sāyaṇa, etc.

***Emphasis on Spiritual (pāramārthika) and Practical (vyāvahārika) Bhāshyas***

Maharshi Dayanand has profusely used etymologies of Maharshi Yāska, works like Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, Āraṇyakas and other scriptures. He has cited Yāska's etymologies and Nighaṇṭu at every step. Even though Dayanand has followed the way mentioned by Yāska, with three types of Vedic interpretation i.e., *ādhyātmika, ādhidaivika* and *adhiyajña,* his commentary is not confined to these alone. He has interpreted the Vedas on the basis of spirituality and practicality. The reason behind this is neither his disagreement with these processes nor his ignorance of them.

Dayanand declared the general principles of his Veda-bhāshya in '*Pratijña-visya*', a chapter of his *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā.* With a lucid enunciation of his guiding principles, Dayanand clarified, why he has followed mainly the practical and spiritual processes, and why he hasn't explained elaborately, the meaning of the mantras by following the three other ways of interpretation i.e., *adhiyajña, ādhidaivika* and *ādhyātmika,* despite accepting them, as is evident from his Sanskrit *Padārtha.* Maharshi states the reason for going beyond these processes in *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā,*

> In (the projected) commentary of the Vedas we shall refer to the ritual side (*Karmakāṇḍa*) only to the extent as is inferable directly from the import of the (textual) words. We shall, however, not provide a detailed account of the

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ritualistic acts which are to be performed in a variety of *yajñas*, beginning with the Agnihotra up to the *Aśva-medhā*, in accordance with the mantras which are applicable to the ritual portion also. The reason is that the application of the mantras to the various parts of rituals, in detail, has already been described in the books (on rituals), e.g. the *Aitareya* and the *Śatapatha*, the *Pūrvamīmānsā*, *Śrautasūtras*, etc. The repetition of the same in (my) commentary will mar the work with the blemish of tautological repetition amounting to the grinding of the already powdered thing - the fault which disfigures the books composed by the non-seers. Only so much application of the mantras to the rituals is to be recognised and specified as has the authority of the Vedas themselves; or is supported by other cognate evidence; or is inferable from the import of the mantras and is contained in the above-named books.[4]

***Avoidance of Adhiyajña and Ādhidaivika Interpretation***

Inspite of knowing and accepting the yajñik procedure (*adhiyajña prakriyā*), Dayanand did not speak about it in detail only to avoid repetition, as it had been described already in *Aitareya* and *Śatapatha* Brāhmaṇas, Pūrva-mīmānsā, Śrauta and other Kalpasūtras. Nevertheless, in whichever mantra there is a reference to *yajña*, the same is stated in the form of *Śabdārtha*, with the reference to its explanation in the Brāhmaṇa texts like Śatapatha. In Yajurveda Bhāshya, Maharshi has, in several instances, referred to Brāhmaṇa texts for explanation of the ritualistic process.

In his Veda-bhāshya, in general, Maharshi Dayanand has not specifically given the interpretation related to natural elements (*ādhidaivika-prakriyā*) in which creation, existence and dissolution of the universe are described. Therefore, he has only indicated the mantras as required to convey that meaning. But in the context of the cosmogony (*Sṛṣṭividyā*),[5] *Nāsadīya sūkta*[6] of Ṛgveda and *Puruṣādhyāya* of Yajurveda (31st chapter) have been explained in detail as being related to the creation. In the *Grantha-prāmāṇayāprāmāṇyavisya*[7] the topic of *ādhidaivika-prakriyā* has been briefly dealt with.

***The Specialty of the Ādhidaivika Interpretation***

A fact worth mentioning is the brevity of Dayanand's interpretation related to natural elements (*ādhidaivika-prakriyā*). Despite the interpretive brevity, his examples leave the commentators and readers wonderstruck, wherever he speaks of the secrets related to the natural elements. Consider, for example, two mantras of Yajurveda:

*Yasmānna jātaḥ paro'anyo'asti ya'āviveśa bhuvanāri viśvā.*
*Prajpatiḥ prajayā saṁrarāṇastrīṇi jyotīmṣi sacate sa ṣodaśī.*[8]
*Yasmājjātaṁ na purā kiṁ canaiva ya ābabhūva bhuvanāni viśvā.*
*Prajāpatiḥ prajayā saṁrarāṇastrīṇi jyotīmṣi sacate sa ṣoḍaśī.*[9]

The word '*Jyotīmṣi*' (ज्योतींषि) occurs in both the mantras. Maharshi Dayanand interprets the word '*jyotīmṣi*' in the former reference as

*Jyotīmṣi* i.e. *sūryyavidyudagn'yākhyāni (jyoto)* – sun, lightning and fire.[10]

Here, '*jyoti*' means the sun, the lightning and the fire. This meaning is suitable to the fire elements (*agni-tattva*) of the three regions. The fire (*agni*) belongs to the earth

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(*pṛthivi*),[11] the lightning (*vidyut*) to the space (*antarikṣa*)[12] and the sun (*sūrya*) to the sky (*dyuloka*).[13] These are the three lights and the three regions. Whereas Maharshi has interpreted the word '*jyotīmṣi*' in the second reference differently -

*Trīṇi jyotiṣī* i.e. *vidyuta sūryajandrarūpāṇi tejomayāni prakāśakāni*[14]

- referring to the three illuminating lighteners in the form of the lightning, the sun and the moon. Here, it is to be noted that in interpreting the word '*jyotīmṣi*' in this reference differently, the order of the lighteners has been changed and the moon has replaced the fire (*agni*).

***Ādhyātmika Interpretation***

Maharshi Dayanand has not discussed in detail, the specifics in the *Ādhyātmika* process, which includes *ātmā* and its abode - the body, *Paramātmā* and His creation, the *brahmāṇḍ*. He has explained these concepts briefly through *Śabdārtha* portion of his bhāshya. He has done so because the knowledge of the body, the abode of *ātmā*, can be had from Ayurveda; the *brahmāṇḍ*, the creation of *Paramātmā*, has been explained in the interpretation of natural elements (*ādhidaivika-prakriyā*); and the knowledge of *ātma* and *Paramātmā* can be gained through *upāsanā* (worship), which is also explained through *śabdārtha*. As the Maharshi writes,[15]

> *Tathaivopāsanākāṇḍasyāpi prakaraṇaśabdānusārato hi prakāśaḥ karisyate. Kutosyaikatra viśeṣastu pātañjalayogaśāstrādibhirvijñeyo'stītyataḥ. Evameva jñānakāṇḍasyāpi. Kutaḥ. Asya viśeṣastu sāṅkhyavedāntopaniṣadādiśāstrānugato drasṭavyaḥ.*

"Similarly, I shall refer to the worship portion also only to the extent as would be compatible with the context and the actual interpretation of the text; because the same treatment will be given to the (spiritual) knowledge portion as it has been fully explained in the Sāmkhya, the Vedānta, Upaniṣads, etc."

***Spiritual and Secular Interpretations***

Maharshi Dayanand, as we have seen earlier, has clarified the reasons for brief but adequate explanations regarding *adhiyajña* (ritualistic practices), *ādhidaivika* (relating to natural elements, such as creation, existence and dissolution) and *adhyātma* (manner of worship, i.e. realisation of *Paramātmā* by *ātmā*).

Importantly, Dayanand has also clarified his approach to the spiritual and secular interpretation of various mantras in his Vedabhāshya. He writes,

> Wherever a stanza is capable of denoting two meanings, i.e., spiritual and secular (material), in accordance with the relevant authority, I shall explain both of them. But nowhere, in any interpretation of any verse, will a reference to God be absolutely absent, because He pervades every portion of this universe and is the efficient cause of both the world and the Veda. For God, i.e., the cause, is always associated with the effect. Where the secular interpretation alone is possible, there this also must be borne in mind that all the substances, the earth etc., exist in the order in which they have been destined by God. In the same way when a

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verse expresses only a spiritual import, the secular significance is also justified through the co-relation of cause and effect.[16]

***Adhiyajña Vedabhāshya***

Though the Maharshi has proposed to give mainly the practical and spiritual meaning of the Vedic mantras, yet there are a number of places where importance and utility of yajña along with the materials etc. to be used, are discussed in detail through *luptopamā* imperfect simile and other figures of speech. In the entire Vedabhāshya there are descriptions of rituals etc. in 154 mantras, i.e. in 93 mantras of Yajurveda and 61 mantras of Ṛgveda. For example in the explanations of the mantras 1.22 and 22.6 of Yajurveda, the importance and utility of the rituals has been brought out beautifully -

> *Atra luptopamālaṅkāro vedyaḥ. Manusyairevambhūto yajñaḥ sadaiva kāryyaḥ, yaḥ pūrṇāṁ śriyaṁ sakalamāyurannādipadārthān roganāśaṁ sarvāṇi sukhāni ca prathayati. Sa kenāpi kadācinnaiva tyājyaḥ. Kutaḥ? Naivaitena vāyuvṛṣṭijalauṣadhiśud'dhikārakeṇa vinā kasyāpi prāṇinaḥ samyak sukhāni sidhyantītyataḥ. Evaṁ sa jagadīśvaraḥ sarvān pratyājñāpayati.*[17]

Meaning: In this mantra, *luptopamālaṇkāra* is to be understood. Human beings should always perform such a yajñik ritual which increases all-round prosperity, enhances longevity, promotes the growth of the food materials etc., spreads all types of happiness and destroys the diseases. It should never be given up by anyone, because without that, the purification of the air, rain-water, herbs and proper happiness are impossible for a living being. The Lord of the universe has ordained all the human beings to perform yajña.

It is evident, how concerned the Maharshi was for the wellbeing, happiness and prosperity of all human beings. Also evident is fact that the Maharshi has in fact duly emphasised the yajñik subject of the ritual (*adhiyajña)* too. He writes, while commenting on the word 'घर्मोऽसि' in the following mantra -

> *He manusyāḥ! Yadagnau sanskṛtaṁ ghṛtādikaṁ havirhūyate tadoṣadhijalaṁ sūryatejovāyuvidyutau ca sanśodhyaiśvaryavard'dhanaprāṇāpānaprajārakṣaṇaśreṣṭha-satkār-animittaṁ jāyate. Kiñcidapi dravyaṁ svarūpato naṣṭaṁ na bhavati kintu avasthāntaraṁ prāpya sarvatraiva pariṇataṁ jāyate; ata'eva sugandhamiṣṭapuṣṭiroganāśakaguṇairyuktāni dravyāṇyagnau prakṣipyauṣadhyādiśud'dhidvārā jagadārogyaṁ sampādanīyam.*[18]

Meaning: O human beings! Oblation of clarified butter etc. nicely heated on fire is offered for promoting prosperity, protecting *prāṇa, apāna* and the people and expressing great hospitality by purifying the herbs, water, brilliance of the sun, air and nature's energy. The essence of any substance is not annihilated, instead, it gets transformed everywhere by acquiring a different state. Therefore fragrant, sweet, nourishing and medicinal substances used for destroying diseases should be offered in

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to the fire and thus by the purification of herbs etc., the whole world should be made free of pollution and ailments.

The subject of spirituality (*adhyātmā-visya*) and the subject related to *ādhidaivika-visya* have also been expounded by the Maharshi in about 352 and 160 mantras, respectively.

Moreover, Maharshi Dayanand in his Vedabhāshya has discussed in detail, subjects related to practical life (*vyavahārika*) and spiritual life (*paramārthika*), knowledge (*vidyā*) and nescience (*avidyā*), rebirth, fruit of actions, liberation, ideal as well as improper conduct, eatables and non-eatables, duty, hypocrisy, idol worship and the science of crafts, geology, the knowledge of the atmosphere, fire, air, lightning, investigation of the objects like the sun and the moon, time-analysis of twilight and dawn etc., herbs, body, longevity, strength, development, the ruler and the ruled, mother and father, men and women, *varṇas* and stages of life (*varṇāśrama*), teacher-instructor, boy-girl, women's education etc. By propounding these topics, the Maharshi has dispelled the misunderstanding that the Veda-mantras are meant only for ceremonial acts and rituals.

***The Spirituous Liquor (surā)***

The Maharshi has beautifully analysed even those things which are regarded as contemptible. Let us take the word *surā*, which is usually understood to be the synonym of liquor. Even many Vedic commentators have interpreted this word as an intoxicating drink, and the modern scholars also accept the same meaning. The Maharshi has rejected that meaning of the word '*surā*' which other scholars have accepted. The word '*surā*' occurs 34 times in the Vedas whereas in the Bhāshya of the Maharshi it has occurred only 15 times. He has interpreted the word *surā* as a synonym of nectar (*soma*), as an adjective of *soma*, as a means of preparation of *soma*, as a synonym of *rasa*, a synonym of water (*udaka*) and as a synonym of the process of preparing *soma*. The following are some examples of his contextual interpretations of the word:

As a synonym of *Soma*:

- *Ttisro rātrīḥ surā sutā*[19] सुरा = सोमरसः
- *Surā tvamasi Ysuṣmiṇī soma'eṣa mā mā hiṁsīḥ*[20] सुरा = सोमवल्यादिलता, सोमः = महोषधिगणः
- *surākāraṁ bhadrāya gṛhamaṁ śreyase...*[21] सुराकारम् = सोमनिष्पादनम्
- *Payasā śukramamṛtaṁ janitraṁ surayā mūtrājjanayanta retaḥ*[22] सुरया = सोमलतादिरसेन
- *Kumbhī surādhānī...*[23] सुराधनी = सुरा सोमरसो धीयते यस्यां सा गर्गरी
- *Surāvantaṁ barhiṣadaṁ suvīraṁ yajñaṁ...*[24] सुरावन्तम् = सुराः प्रशस्ताः सोमा विद्यन्ते यस्मिन् तम्
- *Surāyai babhrvai made...*[25] सुरायै = सोमाय

As an adjective of *Soma:*

- *Sutrāmṇe surāsomān.*[26] सुरासोमान् = सुरया रसेन युक्तान् सोमान् पदार्थान्
- *sutrāmā surāsomān.*[27] सुरासोमान् = सुरया अभिषवेन सूयन्ते तान् (उत्तमान् रसान् इति भावार्थे)

As the means of preparation of *Soma:*

- *Surayā sutasya.*[28] सुरया = शोभनदानशीलया स्त्रिया, सुतस्य = निष्पादितस्य
- *surayā somaḥ.*[29] सुरया=या सूयते सा सुरा तया (from the action of being produced, इति पदार्थे)

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As a synonym of *Rasa:*

- *Kumbhāṅ asiñcataṁ surāyāḥ.*[30] सुरायाः = अभिषुतस्य रसस्य

As a synonym of Water:

- *Surayā bheṣajaṁ...*[31] सुरया = उदकेन
- *Surayā bheṣajaṁ...*[32] सुरया = जलेन

*As a synonym of the process of preparing soma:*

- *Surāvato gṛhe...*[33] सुरावतः = सर्वं कुर्वतः

The Maharshi nowhere gives the meaning of the word *surā* as an intoxicating drink. He assigns the exact and the fittest meaning to the word *soma* - as the nectar. He had realised the essence of dharma, he was able to understand the great importance of the word *surā*, which could reveal the deepest secrets of the three worlds. In Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā[34] these secrets have been disclosed.[35]

***The Reason for Accepting Other Devatās in Comparison to the Ṛksarvāṇukramaṇī***

The Maharshi has accepted the devatās other than those which figure in the *Ṛksarvāṇukramaṇī*, it means that the devatās of a number of mantras have been changed. The difference regarding the matter to be incorporated can be seen in his '*Caturveda-visya-Sūcī*'. For example, all the Bhāshyakāras have accepted Yama-Yami as the devatā of the hymn 10/10 of Ṛgveda according to *Ṛksarvāṇukramaṇī* and have explained it giving a vulgar meaning. Whereas the Maharshi in his '*Caturveda-visya-Sūcī*' has accepted '*Jalādipadārtha-vidyā*' as the subject of discussion and the subject of discussion of the remaining one mantra as '*Praśnottarādi-Padārthavidyā*'.[36] It is surprising that without going through the topics enumerated in '*Caturveda-visya-Sūcī*' carefully while writing commentary on this hymn, Swami Brahmamuni has stated that Maharshi Dayanand understood this hymn as a dialogue between husband and wife only. By writing this, he has narrowed the view-point of the Maharshi. The Maharshi has referred to Ṛgveda 10.10.10 in the fourth chapter of the Satyarth Prakash dealing with *niyoga* from which it should not be understood that the subject matter of this sūkta is only the dialogue between husband and wife, as it also becomes quite evident that the subjects like water etc. have also been expounded. The topics which have been altered by the Maharshi can be seen in his '*Caturveda-visya-Sūcī*'.

Just like the subject (*devatās*), the Maharshi has also changed the seers (Rishis) of the mantras. For example –

In '*Ṛksarvāṇukramaṇī*' the Rishi of the mantras 1, 2, 4, 5, 8 and 10-12 of the sūkta 1/165 of Ṛgveda is given as *Indra*; of the mantras 3, 5, 7 and 9 as *Marutaḥ;* and of 13-15 as *Agastya*. According to Maharshi Dayanand, the seer (rishi) of the whole sūkta is *Agastya*. Similarly in the sūkta 3/33 of Ṛgveda the seer of the mantras 4, 6, 8 and 10 has been given as *Nadyaḥ* and the seer of the mantras 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 12 and 13 has been given as *Viśvamitra* in the *Anukramaṇī*. Here too, according to Maharshi Dayanand the seer of the whole sūkta is *Viśvamitra*.

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***Extension of the Meaning through viable Figures of Speech***

The practical meanings of the mantras are generally based on the figures of speech *Vacaka luptopamālankāra*[37] etc. Through these, the Maharshi has made the meanings of the mantras comprehensive, and has thrown light on subjects like the social, familial, financial and political duties to be performed and the actions to be avoided, as the interpretation related to practical life incorporates the multitude of all actions of the animate and inanimate world. Maharshi Dayanand has explained through figures of speech, the behaviour and the duties of the mother and the father, the father and the son, the king and his people, the teacher and the preacher, the preceptor and the disciple etc.

A number of modern scholars do not agree with the usage of the figures of speech by the Maharshi. According to them, by doing this, the meaning of the word and the mantra becomes incoherent or appears to be devoid of the desired meaning. This can be said only about their disagreement - *Naiṣa sthāṇoraparādhaḥ* नैष स्थाणोरपराधः i.e., It is not the guilt of the block head whom the blind impaired of sight has hit.

***Usage of Svaras and Metres***

Insertion of the accents (*svaras*) in each mantra is a distinguished direction in Maharshi's Bhāshya in comparison to the work of other Bhāshyakaras. Maharshi Dayanand has mentioned the seven *svaras* according to the discipline of *Piṅgalācārya* – *ṣaḍaja, ṛṣabha, gāndhāra, madhyama, pancama, dhaivata* and *niṣāda* for the first time in this domain.

Inclusion of the division of the metres is also a peculiarity of the Bhāshya of the Maharshi. Like other commentators he has mentioned the metres like *Gāyatrī* etc. which are divided into the *padas* (hemistichs of the mantra) which have a definite number of letters in all the parts. He has also indicated the metres in which the number of syllables has a prominent role – *Yadakṣaraparimāṇaṁ tacchandaḥ.*[38] The metres of *Ṛksarvāṇukramaṇī*, i.e. *Daivi, Āsurī, Prājāpatyā, Ārṣī, Yājuṣī, Ārcī,* and *Brāhmī* have also been mentioned. Maharshi Dayanand has mentioned these metres in accordance with the provision of *Chandaḥ-Śāstra Sūtra* of Piṅgalāchārya, who has not mentioned the metres with relation to any particular Samhitā or a particular process of interpretation. The other commentators have not made a mention of metres like *Daivi* and *Āsurī* because their explanations of the mantras are related mainly to ritualistic process. They have used only those *Chanda-Śāstras* which are related to a particular Samhitā or a particular process of interpretation.

Maharshi Dayanand had acquired distinguished knowledge about the metres. That is why in his Bhāshya, he has criticised the commentators like Sāyaṇa and Wilson etc. regarding the metres. For example, Maharshi writes in the introduction of a sūkta of Ṛgveda (1.39) –

> *Atra sāyaṇācāryādibhirvilasanamokṣamūlarākhyātibhiścaitatsūktasthā (yujo) mantrāḥ satobṛhatī-chandaskā āyujo bṛhatī-chandaskāśca (iti) chandaḥśāstrābhiprāyama-viditvānyathā vyākhyātā iti mantavyam.*[39]

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It means that here in this sūkta according to Sāyaṇāchārya, Wilson and Max Müller etc. the metres which have even number of syllables are in '*Satobṛhatī*' metre and those which have odd number of syllables have *Āyujo-Bṛhatī* metre. They have said so without understanding the intended meaning of the *Chandaḥ-Śāstra.*

In the same way, he has criticised Sāyaṇa and Wilson etc. regarding metre and *Ṣaḍajādi svara* in the explanation of Ṛgveda 1.44 and 1.53. Here it is to be noted that Swamiji has criticised Sāyaṇa etc. because these commentators have used those metres which are used in the ritual process and are described by Kātyāyana for this purpose. It is improper to mention them everywhere while explaining the mantras.

There are many of peculiarities of his Veda-bhāshya, of which only a few have been explained here. These are not seen in the Bhāshyas of the other commentators like Uvvaṭa, Mahīdhara and Sāyaṇa etc. These peculiarities elucidate his worldly wisdom, erudition in *Śāstras,* intense desire for the development of the nation and welfare of the people along with his being a visionary seer (rishi).

***Some Specialties of Dayanand's Vedabhāshya***

There are a number of characteristic differences between the Veda-bhāshya of Maharshi Dayanand and those of the other commentators. Some of these are as follows:

- Believing that in the mantras, words like Indra, Agni, Vāyu, Āditya, Mitra and Varuṇa etc. mainly denote *Parameśvara,* Maharshi Dayanand has given attributive meaning pertaining to God along with the meaning pertaining to natural elements or living-beings. When compared to other *Bhāshyas,* this is the greatest fundamental difference.
- Believing that the Vedas are self-evident he has quoted Veda mantras as proof just like other proofs in the support of his interpretations. For example:
  *Agniṃīḷe purohitaṁ...*[40] in this mantra, the Maharshi has given *Parameśvara* as the literal meaning of the word *Agni.* To support this, just as he quotes Brāhmaṇa texts as proof, in the same way, *Indraṁ mitraṁ varuṇam-agnim-āhuratho divyaḥ sa suparo garutmān, ekaṁ sadviprā bahudhā vadantyagniṁ yamaṁ mātariśvānam-āhuḥ*[41] such mantras also have been given as evidence.
  Similarly the Maharshi has interpreted the word '*mitra*' in the mantra *Mitraṁ huve pūtadakṣaṁ varuṇaṁ ca riśādasam*[42] as sun- सर्वव्यवहारसुखहेतुं ब्रह्माण्डस्थं सूर्यम्।
  The mantra- *Mitro janānyātayati bruvāṇo mitro dādhāra pṛthivīmuta yām*[43] has been quoted to support this, because in this mantra – the sun, the supporter of the sky and the earth has been addressed as '*mitra*'.
- While interpreting the mantras Swami Dayanand has not supplemented words according to his conjecture but he has followed Yāska's[44] statement, syllable to syllable

  *Na tu pṛthaktvena mantrā nirvaktavyāḥ, prakaraṇaśaeva tu nirvaktavyāḥ.*

  For example, in the 30th chapter of Yajurveda, while interpreting in prose-order, mantras 6 to 21, the words *parāsuva* and *āsuva* which occur in the 3rd mantra of the same chapter have been connected with all the mantras. Whereas Mahīdhara has associated the verbal form *ālabhate* of the last mantra of this adhyāya in all the

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previous mantras as needed, which is contrary to the meaning of the aforementioned mantras. Mahīdhara's interpretation of the word *ālabhate* as 'cutting' is contrary to the preaching of the Yajurveda where it says – *paśūn pāhi*[45] i.e., protect thy animals.

- All the words of the Vedas have been accepted as *Yaugika* and *Yoga-rurhi* and not as *rurha*, i.e. Maharshi Dayanand has accepted all the words derived from verbal roots. This belief of the Maharshi is the peculiar feature of his Bhāshya. Because of this belief the derivation of the word *vāṭ* (वाट्) in the mantra 2.18 of Yajurveda, which is supposed to be undeclinable (*nipāta*) has also been shown – *Vahanti sukhāni yayā kriyayā sā vāṭ nipāto'yam*[46] by this derivation *vāṭ* is explained as an action which promotes happiness.
- The formation of the words in the mantras has been explained according to Yāska, Pāṇini and Patañjali. For example-

  The Maharshi has explained the formation of the word *dhiṣaṇā* 'धिषणा' of Yajurveda[47] with *kyu* 'क्यु' suffix by *dhṛṣerdhiṣa ca sañjñāyām* धृषेर्धिष च संज्ञायाम्, Uṇādikośa 2.82, whereas Mahīdhara has derived the word *dhṛṣaṇā* 'धृषणा' with two *padas* explaining it as – *dhiyaṁ buddhi karma vā sinoti vyāpnoti dadāti vā.* 'धियं बुद्धिं कर्म वा सिनोति व्याप्नोति ददाति वा।'

  Maharshi Dayanand's comment regarding this explanation is *Bhrāntyā vyākhyātam* "भ्रान्त्या व्याख्यातम्" i.e. this explanation is given due to delusion.
- While establishing coordination of the meaning between the mantras, the Maharshi has shown coordination of the chapters with the preceding and the following chapters and coordination between the maṇḍalas and the sūktas.
- To establish the existence of the formless (*nirākāra*) God and to stress upon worshipping Him only is also the specific characteristic of the Maharshi's bhāshya.
- Another important feature of the Maharshi's bhāshya is the 'focus on women'. By the mantra – *Yathemāṁ vācaṁ kalyāṇīmāvadāni janebhyaḥ*[48] he has not only bestowed upon the women the right to study the Vedas but has also elaborated the qualities, actions and virtues etc. of women in a number of ways. In the sūktas 48 and 49 of the first maṇḍala of Ṛgveda, addressed to *Uṣā*, the various virtues of women have been explained through figures of speech like *Vacaka- Luptopamā* and *upamā* etc. In his interpretation of the mantra 1.164.41 of Ṛgveda, by highlighting the Vedic-wisdom of women, he has elevated their status and positioned them at the highest peak of knowledge. The mantra is –

  *Gaurīrmimāya salilāni takṣatyekapadī dvipadī sā catuṣpadī.*
  *Aṣṭāpadī navapadī babhūvusī sahasrākṣarā parame vyoman.*[49]

  He has shown great respect towards women by interpreting the words – *ekapadī*, एकपदी, *dvipadī* , द्विपदी, *catuṣpadī*, चतुष्पदी, *Aṣṭāpadī*, अष्टपदी and *navapadī* नवपदी of this mantra as – *Ekavedābhyāsinī, abhyastadvivedī, caturvedādhyāpikā, vedopavedavidyāyuktā, caturvadopavedavyākaraṇādi-śikṣāyuktā* "एकवेदाभ्यासिनी, अभ्यस्तद्विवेदा, चतुर्वेदाध्यापिका, वेदोपवेदविद्यायुक्ता, चतुर्वेदोपवेदव्याकरणादि-शिक्षायुक्ता." The interpretations of this context given by Sāyaṇa and Venkaṭamādhava etc. are related to the *ādhyātmika*

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process only. Maharshi alone has raised the status of the woman in his bhāshya to such an extent that she is regarded no less than the man, in any way.

- According to the Maharshi, the *devatā* of a mantra is the subject of the discussion and not some divine being. Therefore, on the basis of '*Yaugikāvāda*' the main meaning of the words like Agni, Vāyu and Āditya etc. relates to the extraordinary powers of *Parabrahma,* the Lord of the world (*Jagadiśvara*).

The secrets of knowledge are revealed only to the people who practise penance. It has been said,

*Tadyadetānstapasyamānān ṛṣīn brahma svayambhvabhyānarṣatta, ṛṣayo.*[50]

It means that Vedic knowledge dawns upon those who practise penance. That is why they are called the seers.

Maharshi Dayanand obtained this knowledge of the Vedas through his devotion to God and his preceptor. Through his penance and power of meditation, Dayanand had reached a state wherein the secrets of the Vedic wisdom were revealed to him, and he got designated, quite rightly, as a 'seer'.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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2. Vishvanath, 1982, *Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra* (2.6.5), Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, New Delhi, p. 252 *विधिर्विधेयस्तर्कश्च वेदः, तर्को न्यायमीमांसे।*
3. Gadadhara, 1952 Vikrami, *Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra* (2.6.6), Medical Hall Yantralya, Kashi, p. 343 *षडङ्गमेके। शिक्षा कल्पो व्याकरणं निरुक्तं छन्दो ज्योतिषमिति षड्भिरङ्गैरुपेतमेक आचार्या वेदमिच्छन्ति।*
4. Maharshi Dayanand, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā* (ed. Parmanand, 1981), Meharchand Lachhmandas, New Delhi, p. 421
5. Maharshi Dayanand, 2022 Vikrami, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā,* Vedic Yantralaya, Ajmer, p. 122
6. *Ṛgveda,* 10.129.1-7
7. Maharshi Dayanand, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā,* p. 300
8. *Yajurveda,* 8.36; यस्मान्न जातः परोऽअन्योऽअस्ति यऽआविवेश भुवनानि विश्वा।
   प्रजापतिः प्रजया संरराणस्त्रीणि ज्योतींषि सचते स षोडशी।।
9. *Ibid.,* 32.5; यस्माज्जातं न पुरा किं च नैव य आबभूव भुवनानि विश्वा।
   प्रजापतिः प्रजया संरराणस्त्रीणि ज्योतींषि सचते स षोडशी।।
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11. i. *आग्नेयी पृथिवी।* (*Tāṇḍya Brāhmaṇa* 15.4.8), Chaukhambha Sanskrit Series Office, Banaras City (Samvat 1993), p. 167
    ii. *आग्नेयोऽयं लोकः।* (*Jaimini Brāhmaṇa* 1.2.3.2), Sanskrit Vidyapeeth, Tirupati (1967), p. 44.
12. *यथाऽसावन्तरिक्षे विद्युत्।* (*Aitreya Āraṇyaka* 3.1.2), Anand Ashram Poona (1992), p. 190
13. *अधिद्यौर्नामासि.... सूर्योऽधिपतिः।* (*Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā* 2.8.14), Swadhyaya Mandal Pardi, pp. 177-178
14. *Yajurveda,* 32.5, Dayanand Bhāshya; त्रीणि ज्योतींषि अर्थात् विद्युत्सूर्यचन्द्ररूपाणि तेजोमयानि प्रकाशकानि
15. Maharshi Dayanand, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā Pratijñavisya,* p. 371; तथैवोपासनाकाण्डस्यापि प्रकरणशब्दानुसारतो हि प्रकाशः करिष्यते। कुतोऽस्यैकत्र विशेषस्तु पातंजलयोगशास्त्रादिभिर्विज्ञेयोऽस्तीत्यतः। एवमेव ज्ञानकाण्डस्यापि। कुतः। अस्य विशेषस्तु सांख्यवेदान्तोपनिषदादिशास्त्रानुगतो द्रष्टव्यः।
16. *Ibid.,* p.372

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17. *Yajurveda*, 1.22; अत्र लुप्तोपमालंकारो वेद्यः। मनुष्यैरेवंभूतो यज्ञः सदैव कार्य्यः, यः पूर्णा श्रियं सकलमायुरन्नादिपदार्थान् रोगनाशं सर्वाणि सुखानि च प्रथयति। स केनापि कदाचिन्नैव त्याज्यः। कुतः? नैवैतेन वायुवृष्टिजलौषधिशुद्धिकारकेण विना कस्यापि प्राणिनः सम्यक् सुखानि सिध्यन्तीत्यतः। एवं स जगदीश्वरः सर्वान् प्रत्याज्ञापयति।
18. *Ibid.*, 22.6; हे मनुष्याः! यदग्नौ संस्कृतं घृतादिकं हविर्हूयते, तदोषधिजलं सूर्यतेजोवायुविद्युतौ च संशोध्यैश्वर्यवर्द्धनप्राणापानप्रजारक्षणश्रेष्ठसत्कारनिमित्तं जायते। किंचिदपि द्रव्यं स्वरूपतो नष्टं न भवति किन्तु अवस्थान्तरं प्राप्य सर्वत्रैव परिणतं जायते; अतएव सुगन्धमिष्टपुष्टिरोगनाशकगुणैर्युक्तानि द्रव्याण्यग्नौ प्रक्षिप्यौषध्यादिशुद्धिद्वारा जगदारोग्यं सम्पादनीयम्।
19. *Ibid.*, 19.14; तिस्रो रात्रीः सुरा सुता...। सुरा = सोमरसः
20. *Ibid.*, 19.7; सुरा त्वमसि शुष्मिणी सोम एष मा मा हिंसीः। सुरा = सोमवल्यादिलता, सोमः = महोषधिगणः
21. *Ibid.*, 30.11; सुराकारं भद्राय गृहपं श्रेयसे...। सुराकारम् = सोमनिष्पादनम्
22. *Ibid.*, 19.84; पयसा शुक्रममृतं जनित्रं सुरया मूत्राज्जनयन्त रेतः। सुरया = सोमलतादिरसेन
23. *Ibid.*, 19.16; कुम्भी सुराधनी...। सुराधनी = सुरा सोमरसो धीयते यस्यां सा गर्गरी
24. *Ibid.*, 19.32; सुरावन्तं बर्हिषदं सुवीरं यज्ञम्...। सुरावन्तम् = सुराः प्रशस्ताः सोमा विद्यन्ते यस्मिन् तम्
25. *Ibid.*, 20.28; सुरायै बभ्रै मदे...। सुरायै = सोमाय
26. *Ibid.*, 21.59; सुत्राम्णे सुरासोमान्। सुरासोमान् = सुरया रसेन युक्तान् सोमान् पदार्थान्
27. *Ibid.*, 21.60; सुत्रामा सुरासोमान्। सुरासोमान् = सुरया अभिषवेन सूयन्ते तान् (उत्तमान् रसान् इति भावार्थे)
28. *Ibid.*, 19.33; सुरया सुतस्य। सुरया = शोभनदानशीलया स्त्रिया, सुतस्य = निष्पादितस्य
29. *Ibid.*, 19.5; सुरया सोमः। सुरया = या सूयते सा सुरा तया (from the action of being produced, इति पदार्थे)
30. *Ṛgveda*, 1.116.7; कुम्भाँ असिञ्चतं सुरायाः। सुरायाः = अभिषुतस्य रसस्य
31. *Yajurveda*, 21.31; सुरया भेषजम्...। सुरया = उदकेन
32. *Ibid.*, 21.38; सुरया भेषजम्...। सुरया = जलेन
33. *Ṛgveda*, 1.191.10; सुरावतो गृहे...। सुरावतः = सर्वं कुर्वतः
34. *Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā*, 2.4.1
35. See Suryadevi, 2059 Vikrami, *Antrikṣa, Vaśiṣaṭha, Brahma ādi Vijñān*, Pāṇini Kanya Mahavidyalaya, Varanasi, p. 33
36. See Suryadevi, 1996, *Tripadi Gau*, Pāṇini Kanya Mahavidyalaya, Varanasi, pp. 16-27
37. See Maharshi Dayanand, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Athalankārabhedavisya*, p. 404
38. *Kātyāyana Ṛksarvāṇukramaṇī*, 2.6; यदक्षरपरिमाणं तच्छन्दः।
39. *Ṛgveda*, 1.39; अत्र सायणाचार्यादिभिर्विलसनमोक्षमूलराख्यादिभिश्चैतत्सूक्तस्था (युजो) मन्त्राः सतोबृहती–छन्दस्का आयुजो बृहती–छन्दस्काश्च (इति) छन्दःशास्त्राभिप्रायमविदित्वाऽन्यथा व्याख्याता इति मन्तव्यम्।
40. *Ṛgveda*, 1.1.1; अग्निमीले पुरोहितम्...
41. *Ibid.*, 1.164.46; इन्द्रं मित्रं वरुणमग्निमाहुरथो दिव्यः सः सुपर्णो गरुत्मान्। एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्त्यग्निं यमं मातरिश्वानमाहुः।।
42. *Ibid.*, 1.2.7; मित्रं हुवे पूतदक्षं– वरुणं च रिशादसम्
43. *Ibid.*, 3.59.1; मित्रो जनान्यातयति ब्रुवाणो मित्रो दाधार पृथिवीमुत द्याम्।
44. *Nirukta*, 13.12; न तु पृथक्त्वेन मन्त्रा निर्वक्तव्याः, प्रकरणश एव तु निर्वक्तव्याः।
45. *Yajurveda*, 1.1; पशून् पाहि
46. *Yajurveda*, 2.18 Dayanand Bhāshya; वहन्ति सुखानि यया क्रियया सा वाट् निपातोऽयम्
47. *Yajurveda*, 1.19
48. *Ibid.*, 26.2; यथेमां वाचं कल्याणीमावदानि जनेभ्यः।
49. *Ṛgveda*, 1.164.41; गौरीर्मिमाय सलिलानि तक्षत्येकपदी द्विपदी सा चतुष्पदी। अष्टापदी नवपदी बभूवुषी सहस्राक्षरा परमे व्योमन्।।
50. *Nirukta*, 2.3.11; *Taittiriyāraṇyakam*, 2.9; तद्यदेतांस्तपस्यमानान् ऋषीन्... ब्रह्म स्वयंभ्वभ्यानर्षत्त, ऋषयोऽभवन्तदृषीणामृषित्वं...।।

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CHAPTER 25

# Dayanand Saraswati: A Vedic Exegete par Excellence

*Ranvir Singh*

A serious student of the Vedas finds himself confused with the diversity and inconsistency, and in some cases, the contradiction in the commentaries and translations of different Vedic texts. One wonders why the Vedic scholars, ancient as well as modern, differ so sharply in their interpretations.

Scholars have recognised some linguistic factors responsible for this variety and incongruity, such as the archaic nature of the Vedic language embodying a considerable number of rare and obscure words, obsolete grammatical forms and their variables with fluctuating usages, which are not met with in classical Sanskrit. Mainly the sectarian approach of some commentators is responsible for this diversity. Consequently, the students and scholars are often confronted with a bewildering gap between the original ideas contained in the Vedic Samhitās and those propounded in Brāhmaṇas, and other auxiliary Vedic literature and the interpretations of these ancient, prehistoric texts. The intentional attempts of exemplification and explanation by different sects such as the ritualists, the mythologists and the mystics, etc., in accordance with their belief have given rise to different schools of Vedic interpretation.

Since the beginning of nineteenth century, the Western scholars have also entered this arena. At the outset, they depended on Sāyaṇa's ritualistic commentary on the Ṛgveda.[1] Later on, applying new methods of comparative philology, a number of Western Vedic Scholars made a systematic, critical and thorough study of the original Vedic texts[2] from their own point of view. They also contributed authentic editions of many Vedic Texts.[3] But in this venture, unfortunately, their vision got biased and tainted. Filled often with a superiority complex, they sought to belittle the contribution of the ancient Indian exegetes and commentators. Caught up in a colonialist self-confidence, Roth expressed his arbitrary view that a qualified European is more

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competent to determine the right meaning of the Ṛgveda than a Brahman interpreter, because the judgment of the former is free of the theological bias of the latter and further, he is equipped with historical outlook, modern scientific scholarship in a wider intellectual horizon.[4] It is a pity that the modern Indian scholars either imitated the models presented by these westerners and the conventional Pandits or remained confined to the cramming of the Vedic Samhitās in the tradition of their families. Thus the secrets of Vedic exegesis were mostly forgotten and survived only in the ancient treatises which were considered for long, outdated and redundant.

Against such a background, Dayanand Saraswati (1824-1883), with an enlightened vision and deep scholarship, arose on the Vedic horizon like a new dawn. He was a great social reformer, a teacher of the real tenets of dharma and a rejuvenating benefactor of the Vedas and the authentic Vedic interpretation.

***The Seer's Sight***

Swami Dayanand Saraswati was a great seer. His vision was illumined and sharpened in the company of his great guru, *Prajñācakṣu* Daṇḍi Swami, Virjanand, who initiated him towards total social reform and the real essence of the Vedic Samhitās as seen by the ancient seers of yore and forgotten since long. Dayanand took the command of his guru to the core of his heart and accepted the essence of the teachings of the Vedas as the guiding spirit of his life. Before coming to Virjanand, he had travelled far and wide and had already seen through the selfish motives and greed of the propagators of various religious sects who were actually guilty of doing many shameful things in the name of the Vedas. Dayanand disapproved of and discarded everything which was against the truth as revealed by the Vedas. All activities initiated by him for social reform were based on the real teachings of the Vedas. Twenty years of his active social life, i.e., from 1863 to 1883 were fully devoted to the rejuvenation of society according to Vedic path.[5] He preached the teachings of the Vedas through lectures, conversations, shāstrārthas and of course through forceful and convincing writings published through the popular medium of Hindi language. Dissatisfied with the Ṛgveda-bhāṣya of Sāyaṇa and Yajurveda-bhāṣya of Mahīdhara and Uvvaṭa, Dayanand undertook the task of a full-fledged bhāṣya of the Vedic Samhitās.

***Ṛgvedādibhāṣyabhūmikā***

The *Ṛgvedādibhāṣyabhūmikā*[6] is a unique work in the field of Vedic scholarship and serves as a rule-book for an authentic explanation of the Vedic texts. Dayanand extensively explained and demonstrated the basic principles supported by several examples, and unlike Sāyaṇa, in his Vedic exegesis, did not deviate at all from his declared principles. The *Ṛgvedādibhāṣyabhūmikā* was prepared as a collective preface for bhāṣyas of all the four Vedas. This is clear from the title of the work itself and is confirmed by Dayanand in the beginning of his Bhāṣya on Yujurveda[7] where he writes that for the detailed information about the basic principles, the reader must consult the *Ṛgvedādibhāṣyabhūmikā,* meant for all the four Vedas. It contains Dayanand's viewpoint regarding the nature, scope and theme of the Vedas such as their origin, eternity, contents, terminology, *brahmavidyā,* and *dharma* etc. Dayanand has dealt with various

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topics in a meticulous and highly authentic manner. The variety, vastness and totality of these topics underline the quality of his Veda-bhāṣya.

The *Ṛgvedādibhāṣyabhūmikā* can be regarded as the most important work as far as Vedic exegesis is concerned, and is an essential guide for the proper understanding of the Veda-bhāṣya of Dayanand. Consciously referring to its importance, Dayanand had forbidden the sale of his Veda-bhāṣyas without *Ṛgvedādibhāṣyabhūmikā* while the latter could be sold by themselves.[8]

***Veda-bhāṣya***

Ṛgveda-bhāṣya was initiated in 1877. While declaring the authenticity of his bhāṣya, Dayanand says that he is going to unfold the true meaning of the Vedas in his bhāṣya on the authority of the prior bhāṣyas such as Aitareya and Śatapatha etc., because these are the Vedic compositions of the erudite seers from Brahmā to Yājñavalkya, Vātsyāyana and Jaimini. He states that his bhāṣya is based on authority of the expounded Vedic exegesis in the form of the six Vedāṅgas by Yāska, Pāṇini and Patañjali etc., and on the six Upāṅgas composed by Jaimini etc., and in the same way on the Upavedas and Vedic Śākhās. His bhāṣya contains nothing that is inauthentic or based on personal whims.[9]

Dayanand rejected the ritualistic commentaries written by Rāvaṇa, Uvvaṭa, Sāyaṇa and Mahīdhara etc., because these deviated from the path shown by the ancient seers and were contrary to the actual meaning of the Vedas. Composed with the help of these bhāṣyas the short explanations of the Vedas by the Europeans, written in the languages of their respective countries, too are not authentic. And under the influence of these foreigners, the commentaries written by some Indians in Prakrit (Hindi) also are replete with fallacies and falsifications. Exposing the futility of these works, Dayanand hoped that by the perusal of his bhāṣya the real picture of the Vedas would be crystal clear to the scholars and, in consequence, those translations and *ṭīkās* as elaborated above shall be discarded.[10]

Dayanand also initiated the Yajurveda-bhāṣya along with the Ṛgveda-bhāṣya on the suggestion of an associate.[11] He consented, perhaps, taking account of the popularity of Yajurveda and its relevance to *Yajñas* such as *gomedha, aśvamedha, naramedha* etc. It is a matter of satisfaction that Swami Dayanand could complete Yajurveda-bhāṣya.[12]

Besides the bhāṣyas of Ṛgveda and Yajurveda, about 300 mantras have been fully explained in Ṛgvedādibhāṣyabhūmikā alone. Moreover, in Satyarth Prakash, Pañcamahāyajñavidhi, Āryābhivinaya and Sanskāravidhi also, a considerable number of Vedic mantras and thoughts have been expounded.

***Dayanand's Fundamental Stand regarding the Vedas***

Dayanand Saraswati was a proficient and perfect yogī, an enlightened scholar and an unparalleled master of Sanskrit, blessed by his guru, the great grammarian Daṇḍi Swami, Virjanand. *Bahuśruta* (well versed in the Vedas), *bahudṛṣṭa* (a great observer) and filled with an unalloyed faith in the authenticity of Vedic knowledge, Dayanand had seen through the deeper, metaphoric and hidden sense (*nihitaṃ guhāyām*) of Vedic mantras by the power of his refined intellect of logic (*tarka*).[13] He was fully convinced

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regarding the eternal and truthful nature of the Vedas. He always made his firm stand well known to all, through his speeches, conversations, Shāstrārthas, correspondence, advertisements and certainly through his forceful and celebrated works. The main features of his standpoint on the Vedas can be summarised as follows:

1. Out of the available Vedic Samhitās, the following four are fundamental and authentic: The Śākala-Samhitā of Ṛgveda; the Vājasaneyī-Mādhyandina-Śukla-Yajurveda-Samhitā, the Rāṇāyanīya Samhitā of Sāmaveda and the Śaunakīya-Samhitā of Atharvaveda.[14] Having been revealed, these four are self-authenticated.[15] Other Samhitās, available in any form or referred to in different ancient works are Śākhās and not the Vedas. Similarly, the Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas, Upaniṣads are not the Vedas but auxiliary Vedic literature. These along with the Śākhās are to be considered authentic only when they are in conformity with the four basic Samhitās of the Vedas.[16]
2. The Vedas are eternal.[17] They remain present in the consciousness of *Iśvara* even during the time of *Pralaya.* Ṛgveda, Yajurveda, Sāmaveda and Atharvaveda were enlightened into and revealed in the hearts of the four seers, *viz.* Agni, Vāyu, Āditya and Angirā respectively by the *Paramātman* at the initiation of creation.[18] Veda is the name of that revealed knowledge. The Vedic Samhitās are called as the Vedas, because, these embody that divine knowledge of existence.[19] The relation between the Vedic words and the objects signified is also divine as the *Parameśvara* is the home of all sciences.[20]
3. All the Vidyās which have been enumerated as the topics in the contents of Ṛgvedādibhāṣyabhūmikā including *śilpa-, dhanur-, vāṇijya-,* and *kṛṣi* - are present in the Vedas in a form of fundamental knowledge (*Mūloddeśataḥ*).[21] All knowledge of the true sciences past, present or future, known in the books or to human minds has its origin in the Vedas; for all the exact and real knowledge has been enshrined in them by the *Parameśvara.* Therefore the light of truth, exhibited in whatever form, wherever, has sprung from the Vedas.[22]
4. The Vedic words are *yaugika* and do not have any *rūrha* (conventional) meaning. They always convey a derivative and an etymological sense and may convey different meanings in different contexts. Consequently, words occurring in a specific sense in the Vedic language may not necessarily convey a similar meaning in classical Sanskrit. *Rūrha* means conventional, i.e., which is not derived from some basic verbal root but is conventionally known for some object, like the word '*hasti*' is known for an elephant. Its basic word '*hasta*' is not derived. Yāska calls '*rūrha*' words as '*saṁvijñāta*', i.e., traditionally known for some object or thing.[23]
5. Though the given pada-text of mantras is highly beneficial, it is not always to be adhered to. The intended sense of the Vedic words relating to their context is more important than the man-made *pada-pāṭhas.* For example, Yāska analyses the compound *māsakṛt* of Ṛgveda 1.105.18 as *māsa+kṛt,*[24] and not as *ma+sakṛt* as Shaunaka has done in his *padapāṭha.* Yāska on very authentic grounds declares the supremacy of meaning over the grammatical analysis when he comments – *arthanityaḥ parikṣeta ...na saṁskāramādriyeta.*[25] Patañjali also supports the same principle in his Mahābhāṣya – *na lakṣaṇena padakārā anuvartyāḥ, padakārair nāma*

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*lakṣaṇamanuvartyam.*[26] Being a staunch follower of Yāska, Pāṇini and Patañjali, Dayanand steadfastly followed the principles laid down by them as authorities and has quoted them extensively.

6. When an erudite and versatile scholar explains a Vedic text, it is not necessary to follow the applications already available. Independent explanation based on valid reason (*tarka*) and direct relation to the context is to be taken as relevant.[27]
7. Dayanand negated the multiplicity of gods and established monotheism. Agni, Indra, Varuṇa, Mitra, Rudra and Viṣṇu etc., are only emanations of the one and only one God. These are the epithets based on the qualities, actions and nature (*guṇa-karma-svabhāva*) of the One Supreme God (*Parameśvara*).[28]

   Moreover, the different names that are explained in a derivative manner, and the ones that occur in a reference describing naturalistic matter and worldly affairs, also convey different meanings such as fire, sun, lightning, soul, breath or ruler, governor, commander, general, minister etc., in conformity with their respective contexts. While explaining the word *deva,* one must bear in mind all the ten meanings of the root *div* in the context of *laukika vyavahāravṛtti* and *pāramārthikā-vṛtti.*[29] The usage of words is to facilitate the unrestricted flow of meaning. There are many words which are synonyms and many others that are homonyms.[30] Complexities found with regard to meaning must be resolved by examining *prakṛti* and *pratyaya* (the base word and the affixes). One must logically assume the *pratyaya* on the basis of *prakṛti* and *prakṛti* on the basis of *pratyaya.*[31]
8. No description of specific Gods such as Indra, Viṣṇu, Savitā, Rudra and Varuṇa etc., who live above in some Heaven and take up fight with some *Asuras,* is found in the Vedas. The words *ārya, dāsa, dasyu* etc., occurring in the Vedas do not represent some races and similarly, the conflicts supposedly described between them do not narrate any historical or racial wars. These words have been used in a figurative and metaphorical sense and narrate the struggle between good and evil or some natural phenomena. Sometimes these words are adjectives and not nouns. These need to be explained accurately according to their derivation and the context.

   For clarifying this point, an example of the war like descriptions of *Indra* and *vṛtra* can be examined here. Yāska says, in the explanation of Ṛgveda 1.32.10:

   Indraśatrurindro'sya Śamayitā vā Śātayitā vā. Tasmādindraśatruḥ. Tatko vṛtraḥ. Megha iti nairuktāḥ. (Tvāṣṭro'sura ityataihāsikāḥ.) Apāṁ ca jyotiṣaśca miśrībhāvakarmaṇo varṣakarma jāyate. Tatropamārthena yuddhavarṇā bhavanti. Ahivattu khalu mantravarṇā brāhmaṇavādāśca. Vivṛddhyā Śarīrasya srotāṇsi nivārayañcakāra. Tasmin hate prasasyandira āpaḥ. Tadabhivādinyeṣarg bhavati.[32]

   Translation: Whose enemy is *Indra,* i.e., *Indra* is his slayer, or destroyer, therefore he (is called) 'having *Indra* as his enemy'. But who is *Vṛtra*? 'It is a cloud', say the etymologists. (It is a demon, son of *Tvaṣṭā*; say the legendarians). The phenomenon of rain is produced by the commingling of water (vapours) and lightning (*Jyotiṣ*). With reference to this, there are figurative descriptions of battle.

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Indeed, the descriptions of Vedic stanzas and the narratives of the Brāhmaṇas (depict him), no doubt, as a serpent. By expanding his body, he blocked the channels (of the clouds/rivers). When he was killed, water flowed forth..." Thus it is clear that *Indra* represents the lightning and *Vṛtra*, the cloud. The whole description relates to the much awaited rain, figuratively narrated as a war between *Indra* and *Vṛtra*.

The word *deva* or *devāḥ* refers to common erudite and respected persons of society as mother, father, *atithi*, (guest) and the erudite *ācārya*, etc.[33] Other objects and things such as Supreme-Self, self, breath, faculties of knowledge, the sun, the root, the moon etc., where different senses of √*divu* suit, as given in the *Dhātupāṭha* of Pānini,[34] can be connotations of this word. These senses can even be in a broader perspective of the respective meanings. In the same way, different meanings of the roots with reference to the context are to be taken into consideration for explaining the texts of the Vedas.

9. *Devatā* of the concerned sūkta or mantra is the subject matter narrated in the same.[35] Some indication or some distinguishing mark occurring in a mantra, viz. name etc., of a substance, is considered as the devatā of the same.
10. Savitā, Sūrya, Viṣṇu etc., and Uṣā, Aditi and Saraswatī etc., the masculine and the feminine *Devatās* of the Vedas which denote some natural things may also imply the common erudite men and women of society. Thus the Vedas on one hand convey the best ideas for the welfare of the society and on the other hand the description of various things found in nature. The reference and the context decide the appropriate sense.
11. No history of particular sages and rulers or geographical names and names of rivers etc., are traceable in the basic Samhitās of the Vedas.[36] Actually, there is no occurrence of any proper noun whatsoever. The words that look like proper names seemingly conveying a historical sense, actually possess derivative meanings i.e., considering the relevant meaning of the basic root from which the concerned word has been derived.
12. *Yajña* does not mean only a material sacrifice, i.e., to offer *havis* in fire. Any positive, creative, noble and unselfish act is called *Yajña*.[37] Different senses of √*yaj*,[38] the basic root, are to be taken into consideration while explaining the words derived from this root.
13. The references to *pitryajña* in the Vedas are with regard to the reverence and service of living *pitaras* and not to the dead ones.[39] The living grand-parents and parents are to be looked after properly.
14. The Vedic Samhitās neither prescribe inhuman deeds such as *paśubali*, *narabali* and eating of meat etc., nor do they have any vulgar and filthy meanings. Whosoever subscribes to or agrees with such depictions and connotations has failed to understand the Vedas properly.[40]
15. All human beings have equal right and eligibility to read and consult the Vedas. It is not justifiable to debar women and Shudras.[41]

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***The Main Styles of Vedic Interpretation and Homonymous Nature of Vedic words***

The Vedas enjoy the highest regard among the Indian society and scholars since time immemorial. Brāhmaṇas, Ārayaṇyakas, Upaniṣads, Vedāṅgas and Upāṅgas all are the extensions of the Vedas and serve as tools for the legitimate exegesis of the Vedas.

The Vedas contain *stutis* of many devatās by their names such as Agni, Vāyū, Indra, Mitra, Varuṇa, Savitā, Sūrya, Pūṣā, Aśvinau, Marut and Ṛbhavaḥ etc. There are many sūktas in Vedic Samhitās which have been visualised by some particular Rishi and each of them is devoted to the *stuti* of some deity. Many exegetes take these deities as independent personal gods and explain the mantras as such, while Yāska and some others explain them as representations of natural phenomena of universe such as earth, air, fire, sun, moon, rain, thunder, water, etc. These views represent the *adhidaivata prakriyā* of Vedic Interpretation.

Yāska, in the seventh chapter of Nirukta, has discussed that the subjects or themes of the mantras called *devatā*, are of four types:

i. Conscious and sentient subjects like the human beings;[42]
ii. Un-sentient subjects like the natural things;[43]
iii. Both-kinds, sentient and non-sentient, Agni, Vāyu and Āditya etc., when explained as conscious and animate like God, soul, king, *senapati*, are regarded as conscious like humans. When they are explained as non-sentient like fire, air, sun and water etc., then they are unconscious like inanimate objects;[44]
iv. The fourth kind of the subject 'deity' is that like a technical term, the things like *ulūkhala-mūsala* are considered as deity because they act as instruments to serve the purpose of conscious beings. For example, *yajña* is a deity because it accomplishes the wishes of the *yajamāna*.[45]

This stratification helps in understanding the nature of the deity in the Vedic mantras and also clarifies how one can explain them according to *adhidaivata-prakriyā* considering the un-sentient form of Vedic deities.

There are two categories of *Adhyātma-prakriyā*; first related to the description of the body and the other to the description of Brahma. According to the first one, the Veda-mantras are explained with reference to body, speech, mind, breath and soul etc., while according to the second, the reference is made to the qualities, deeds and inherent nature of Brahma i.e., God.

Unlike the *Adhyātma-prakriyā* followed by those like Yāska, in the *Yājñika-prakriyā* of Vedic interpretation, mantras are explained in relation to their supposed use (*viniyoga*) in different rituals of yajña. The Yājñika Bhāṣyakāras like Skanda Swami, Sāyaṇa, Uvaṭa and Mahīdhara suggest the application of a mantra, before its explanation. Skanda Swami, a commentator of Ṛgveda states before his interpretation of the first mantra, that all mantras of Ṛgveda are parts of rituals, and hence need a Bhāṣya.[46] These bhāṣyakāras have mostly, but not always, explained the mantras according to *Yājñika-prakriyā*. In some references, they have explained mantras according to *Adhyātma-prakriyā* and other methods too.[47]

The process of interpretation of different prakriyās can be understood by citing the example of a mantra from Ṛgveda,[48] which is also found in Yajurveda[49]-

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*Viśvāni deva savitar duritāni parāsuva | Yad bhadraṁ tanna-āsuva ||*

The general meaning of this mantra is 'O Savitā Deva *(Parameśvara)*! Let all our *duritas* (negativities) be cast away from us and let us have all that is bhadra (the good)'. Now, the debatable meaning relates to 'Savitā Deva'. According to Ādhidaivata-prakriyā '*Savitā*' is the sun, while according to Adhyātma-prakriyā 'Savitā' is a king or an erudite scholar, etc.[50]

*Adhibhūta-prakriyā* is the one not mentioned by Yāska by its name. It is related to the Vedic mantras with regard to *bhūtas*, i.e., different beings, such as humans and other animals.[51] The interpretations relating to nation, society, families, educational institutions etc. are also included. The Vedas embody extensive descriptions regarding education, marriage, familial coherence, duties of kings and their subjects, victory over the enemies, agriculture, commerce, animal development etc. The bhāṣyakāras have done this type of exegesis, which is addressed as the *adhibhūta-prakriyā*. Yāska has included such instances which come under this *prakriyā*[52] and has extensively narrated this *prakriyā* with many examples from Ṛgveda and other texts of Vedic literature.[53]

In the same way, the Vedic words are explained as having various meanings.[54] They give different senses in different contexts. For example, one can take the word *Indra* which occurs numerously throughout the Vedic literature -

i. In the great universe, Indra is God[55] (*Paramātmā*);
ii. In the environment, Indra is sun, air, thunder and earth;[56]
iii. In the body, Indra is soul, mind, heart, breath, speech and sight, etc.;[57]
iv. In the social and political context, Indra is king and commander;[58]
v. In the *yajña*, Indra is *yajña* itself or *Yajamāna*, i.e., the host.[59]

In the following mantra of Ṛgveda, different meanings of the word *aditi* have been given -

*Aditirdyauraditirantarikṣamaditirmātā sa pitā sa putraḥ |*
*Viśve devā aditiḥ pañca janā aditirjātamaditirjanitvam ||*[60]

Translation - Aditi is *dyau* (*dyuloka*), Aditi is sky (*antarikṣa*), Aditi is mother, Aditi is father, Aditi is son, Aditi is *Viśve-devāḥ*, Aditi is *pañca-janāḥ*, Aditi is what is born (*jāta*) and Aditi is what causes births, i.e., the generating or procreating power (*janitva*).

Dayanand says that in his Vedabhāṣya all these meanings of *Aditi* will be taken into consideration without citing this mantra every time.[61]

The above examples establish quite clearly that the Vedic words are homonymous because the roots from which they have been derived are also homonymous. The context is accepted as the main factor in deciding the relevant meaning. Yāska has specifically made it clear that the etymology of Vedic words is to be decided by its root in the context.[62] There are some other styles (*Prakriyās*) of Vedic interpretation but they broadly fall under the purview of the styles mentioned above.

***Western Indologists***

The Western scholars have propounded that for reliable Vedic exegesis, comparative philology and a comparison of Vedic words and legends with Avesta, Greek, Latin, Gothic, Lithuanian and English etc., are necessary for authenticity.

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Max Müller has translated the word *bradhna* in the sense of animal (horse) only while in the present context Sāyaṇa has explained it as āditya which has been accepted by Dayanand as partially correct. Dayanand criticised Max Müller in strong words, as follows,

> Prof. Max Müller takes the word *Bradhna* only in the sense of 'horse' in his English translation of the Ṛgveda. It is based on delusion. Acharya Sāyaṇa's interpretation of this mantra is partially correct, where he takes this word to mean the Sun. But the source of Prof. Max Müller's rendering is untraceable in the world (lit. in the sky or in the antipodes). Hence it is inferred that it is a creation of his own imagination. Consequently, it is of no value and authority.[63]

Most Western scholars of the time were acting upon a pre-determined agenda to prepare tools for the Christian missionaries, and to facilitate translations of the Bible, the Old Testament and the New Testament in Sanskrit and Hindi. These renderings were to be used for conversion of the natives of India to the fold of Christianity.[64] Rev. J. Wenger translated the Bible into Sanskrit and Rev. J. Parsons of Varanasi prepared a new Hindi version of the 'New Testament'.[65] Monier Williams wrote – "I have made it the chief aim of my professional life to provide facilities for the translation of our sacred Scriptures into Sanskrit, and for the promotion of a better knowledge of the religions and customs of India, as the best key to a knowledge of the religious needs of our great Eastern Dependency."[66] Therefore, it is clear that the Westerners had a specific agenda to enter the field of Indology. Dayanand saw through this hidden agenda and discarded all their translations of Vedic texts as spurious.[67] However, one cannot discard the editing work done by the foreigners. Some scholars devoted their whole life in this venture and produced marvellous editions of many unpublished texts.

***The Basic Nature of Dayanand's Vedic Exegesis***

Dayanand accepts that *vijñānakāṇḍa, karmakāṇḍa, upāsanākāṇḍa* and *jñānakāṇḍa* are the subjects of the Vedas but the initial *vijñānakāṇḍa* is the most prominent among them.[68] A unique feature of Dayanand's Veda-bhāṣya, is that the *kāṇḍas* are further dilated in two forms of exegesis, the *Pāramārthika* and the *Vyāvahārika.*

In the context of Vedic exegesis, references to the Supreme Soul (*Paramātman*) have been called *paramārtha* and thus *Pāramārthika* means relating to *paramārtha* i.e., *stuti, prārthanā* and *upāsanā* of the Supreme Soul (God). In a more lucid sense, *paramārtha* can be explained as the exposition of the true nature of the Supreme Soul; an account of His qualities, actions and inherent disposition; the performance of His *stuti* (praise), *prārthanā* (request for benevolence), and *upāsanā* (sitting in meditation of God); extension of yoga gradually to achieve *mukti.* Needless to say that the explanations related to traditional *Adhyātma-prakriyā* are related to the Supreme Soul (*Paramātmā*) and the soul (*jīvātmā*).[69] This type of interpretation has been defined as the *Pāramārthika-prakriyā.* Styled by Dayanand, it is a new form of *Adhyātma prakriyā.*

The expositions which refer to subjects other then *Paramārtha* have been collectively described as *Vyāvahārika-Prakriyā,* and include all expressions concerning

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*vyavahāra-vidyā.* Subjects relating to *Adhidaivata-Prakriyā,* references relating to astronomy and physical sciences etc., others relating to human body and its faculties, laws, by-laws and formalism of *Yajña* etc., relating to *Adhiyajña-prakriyā,* and education, family, union, society, nation etc.; relating to *Adhibhūta-prakriyā,* all the explanations relating to these *prakriyās* have been included in *Vyāvahārika-prakriyā.*

Mythological interpretation and *Abhimānī-Devatāvāda* of *Adhidaivata* School of interpretation and the *Aitihāsika prakriyā* have been negated and totally discarded by Swami Dayanand. Indian scholars such as Skanda Swami, Sāyaṇa, Uvaṭa and Mahīdhara etc., and the Western scholars like Max Müller, Roth, Wilson, Grassman, Griffith, Macdonell and Keith favour interpretations that include the descriptions of individual history and geography. Their Vedabhāṣyas and explanations are quite against the set principles of Vedic interpretation. According to *Nirukta,* the descriptions of war between Devas and Asuras in Vedic Sūktas, such as the conflict between Indra and Vṛtra,[70] are metaphoric or allegorical, and relate to some *ādhyātmika, ādhidaivika* or *ādhibhautika* narratives or natural processes. Dayanand categorically refutes the presence of any of individual or social history in the Vedas. He has, in many instances, criticised Sāyaṇa and the Westerners for deriving any history of kings, sages, cities, rivers and other personal names in Vedic mantras.[71]

Clearly describing the twofold division of his exegesis, Dayanand wrote in the *Pratijñā-viṣaya* of his Ṛgvedādibhāṣyabhūmikā -

> *Athātra yasya-yasya mantrasya pāramārthikavyāvahārikayordvayorarthayoḥ Śleṣālaṅkārādinā sapramāṇaḥ sambhavo'sti, tasya-tasya dvau dvāvarthau vidhāsyete. Parantu naiveśvarasyaikasminnapi mantrārthe'tyantaṁ tyāgo bhavati. Kutaḥ? Nimittakāraṇasyeśvarasyāsmin kāryye jagati sarvāṅgavyāptimattvāt, kāryyasyeśvareṇa sahānvayācca. Yatra khalu vyāvahāriko'rtho bhavati, tatrāpīśvararacanānukūlatayaiva sarveṣāṁ pṛthivyādidravyāṇāṁ sadbhāvācca. Evameva pāramārthike'rthe kṛte tasmin kāryyārthasambandhāt so'pyartha āgacchatīti.*[72]

The *Vyāvahārika* style adopted by Dayanand is not totally new. Sāyaṇa (1315-1387 A.D.) and Anandabodha (1200-1297 A.D.) in their Bhāṣyas of Yajurvedīya Kāṇva Samhitā (12.2, 3) have done Bhāṣya with a similar methodology. In 12.2, there occurs a dual vocative word- *vṛṣaṇvasū* (वृषण्वसू),[73] Sāyaṇa explains it as 'O Husband and Wife (हे दम्पति)', and Anandbodha explains – 'O *Adhvaryu* and *Yajamānau* (हे वृष्ण्वसू अध्वर्युयजमानौ)'. Similarly, in the next mantra,[74] there occurs a plural vocative word – *sakhāyaḥ.* Sāyaṇa explains it as – 'O friends, *Ṛtvig* and *Yajamānaḥ* (सखायः परस्पर सख्यं प्राप्ताः ऋत्विग्यजमानाः)', and Anandbodha explains it – 'O Ṛtvig etc. (हे सखायः हे ऋत्विगादयः)'. These examples show that Dayanand, by following *Vyāvahārika-prakriyā,* has not invented a hypothetical style; but has adopted and furthered an authentic one that has the support of earlier exegetes of the Vedas.

The sequence of the Veda-bhāṣya of Dayanand, as he has mentioned at the end of Ṛgvedādibhāṣyabhūmikā, is as under:[75]

1. *Bhūmikā* i.e., a prior statement about the meaning of the mantra;

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2. The text of the mantra;
3. *Padapāṭha* of the mantra;
4. *Śabdārtha* i.e., the authentic meaning of the words in their order of occurrence in the mantra;
5. *Anvaya*, i.e., adjustment of the words in the semantic order; and
6. *Bhāvārtha*, i.e., the main theme and purpose of the mantra.

On the basis of the discussion above, the following facts are gathered:

i. Both kinds of references, viz. *Pāramārthika* and *Vyāvahārika* have been embodied in the Vedas. ...Such as cows (*gāvaḥ*) in the Vedas indicate not only the animal cow, but also the parts of land, rays of the sun, objects of senses, rays of knowledge, streams of cow-milk, things made of cow milk such as butter etc., cosmic bodies such as the Sun and the Moon, the string of a bow, speech, lightning, sky, heaven (*dyau*) and grain, etc.[76] For further clarification, the Bhāṣya of the first five mantras of the Ṛgveda done by Dayanand may be consulted where the word *agni* has been explained as *Īśvara* for obtaining liberation and as worldly fire for the accomplishment of various arts and crafts. These two senses of *agni* have been derived by *Śleṣa* (*alaṁkāra*).

ii. There are some mantras, whose text includes *Pāramārthika* as well as *Vyāvahārika* types of subjects and objects. For example, the word '*śravas*' indicates different senses such as grain, wealth, water, fame, praise, Veda, the strength of soul, strength of mind etc.[77]

iii. Some mantras embody *Vyāvahārika* subjects only, but *Paramātmatattva*, i.e., Supreme Soul, is not entirely out of sight. For example, the Ṛgveda-bhāṣya of Dayanand for 1.14.12 can be seen as having *Vyāvahārika* meaning only. Though the literal meaning of the mantras may not be related to *Parameśvara* yet God remains present as the primary inner cause of the subject described as He remains present always in all the subjects.

iv. There are some other mantras which embody *Paramārtha* only. In such cases too, He (*Paramātman*) may be related with the worldly substances. For example, the bhāṣya of Dayanand of the last four mantras of the first sūkta of Ṛgveda can be consulted where only *pāramārthika bhāṣya has* been done. In the conclusion of the bhāṣya of first *sūkta* Dayanand writes:

प्रथमसूक्ते पंचभिर्मन्त्रैः श्लेषालंकारेण व्यवहारपरमार्थविद्याद्वयसाधनं प्रकाशितम्,
एवं चतुर्भिर्मन्त्रैरीश्वरस्योपासना स्वभावश्चास्तीति।

Thus, both the interpretations overlap with each other. Context and adjectives used are the definitive and deciding clues for a particular kind of interpretation. Where the description is related to *stuti, prārthanā, upāsanā, sarvajña, vyāpaka, śuddha, sanātana* etc., it indicates *Paramārtha*. And contrary to it, where the description suggests *virāt, puruṣa, deva, Ākāśa, Vāyu, Agni, Jala* etc., there is the context of *Vyavahāra*. The adjectives like *utapatti, sthiti, pralaya, alpajña, jaḍa, dṛśya* etc., cannot be used with relation to *paramārtha* because *Paramātman* cannot be subject to these adjectives. In the same way the adjectives like *icchā, dveṣa, prayatna, sukha, duḥkha* and *alpajña* etc., describe the *jīvātamās*. In this way, Dayanand has divided his bhāṣya in a unique manner

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with two-fold style of interpretation. All other styles are merged in *pāramārthika* and *vyāvahārika prakriyās.*

Dayanand contributed a systematic and transparent exegesis to the Vedas. Despite being the most logical, why could not the Vedic bhāṣya of Dayanand gain the deserved ground among the students, teachers and society at large? Why does it not carry the sanction and attestation of modern scholars? Why do many people ignore the authentic writings of such an enlightened and humanitarian scholar? It seems that the reason behind this attitude is the lack of reasoning and a scientific outlook, the continued mental dependence on superstitions and the regular adherence to Paurāṇic rituals prevalent as traditional family customs for the consequent pecuniary gains. Many of the modern scholars have followed the Western scholars and now they have to adhere to the same line willingly or unwillingly, otherwise, they would have to negate their own previous stand and writings. Many scholars write articles taking the line of Dayanand and using his technique of exegesis but without giving credit to him and thus they are indulging in the imitation of his bhāṣyas which amounts to plagiarism.

Dayanand, at the initial stage declared and advertised the fundamental principles of his Vedic interpretation. He supersedes other *bhāṣyakāras* because he has perused the text of the Veda as the first and prime clue for his bhāṣya. He considered Veda as self-authenticated, and he made optimum use of the same for prime and superb authenticity of his explanation. After the Vedas he has relied upon *Nighaṇṭu,* the base work of Yāska's Nirukta, which represents the earliest lexicographical attempt to tackle the problem of Vedic interpretation in a systematic manner. Dayanand has also perused fully and cautiously the Padapāṭha, other Śākhās of Vedic *Samhitās,* Brāhmaṇas, *Nirukta* of Yāska, Āraṇyakas, Upaniṣads, Prātiśākhyas, Manusmṛiti, Pāṇini's Aṣṭādhyāyī and Patañjali's Mahābhāṣyam. Dayanand accepted these works as authentic to the limit of taking them in consonance with the four Vedas. He has made ample use of *tarka-ṛṣi* (logic as a sage), appraised and approved by Yāska.[78] Being based on these authentic works, Dayanand's bhāṣya has become exclusive, authentic and quite revolutionary. With an unalloyed faith in truth and the Supreme Soul, Dayanand made a unique contribution to Vedic interpretation. His supreme goal was the total welfare of humanity, and he worked for this cause, even at the cost of his own spiritual advancement, i.e., samādhi and brahmānanda. On the strength of his true Vedic knowledge, he single-handedly fought the curse of idolatry, untouchability, caste system and superstition. His humanistic approach towards all social problems, his quest for the revival of Indian moral values, the great efforts to unite Indian intelligentsia and a scientific Vedic interpretation projected the highest ideals for individual as well as societal behaviour and inspired hope, courage and glory into the nation and its people. His Veda-bhāṣya, like other works, is the great pride of the rich heritage of Indian scholarship, and Swami Dayanand Saraswati remains a Vedic exegete par excellence.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. F. Max Müller (ed.), 1890-1892, *Ṛgveda,* with Sāyaṇa's Bhāṣya, London.
2. Main translations in English, German and French, applying new philological methods are as

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follows:

a. K.F. Geldner, 1907; 1909, *Der Ṛgveda in Auswahl*, W. Kohlhamer, Stuttgart.
b. A.A. Macdonell, 1917, *A Vedic Reader for Students*, Oxford.
c. H. Hillebrandt, 1913, *A Collection of Vedic Hymns*, German translation, Gottingen, Leipzig.
d. Louis Renu, 1955-69, *Etudes Vedices et Paninenes*, French translation.
e. A.B. Keith, 1914, *The Veda of the Black Yajus School : Entitled Taittiriya Samhitā*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard Oriental Series.
f. W.D. Whitney, 1905, *Atharvaveda Samhitā*, Eng. Tr., Cambridge, Harvard Oriental Series.

3. Main editions of Vedic Texts by foreigners are as the following:

a. F. Max Müller (ed.), 1849-74, *Ṛgveda*, London, parts 1-5.
b. L.V. Shroeder (ed.), 1900; 1922, *Kāṭhaka Samhitā of Black Yajurveda*, Leipzig.
c. J. Stevenson (ed.), 1842, *Kauthumīya Samhitā of Sāmaveda*, Oriental translation fund of Great Britain and Ireland Society Oriental Texts.
d. W. Caland (ed.), 1907, *Die Jaiminiya-Samhitā mit einer Einleitung uber die sāmaveda literature*, Breslau.
e. L.V. Shroeder (ed.), 1881-86, *Maitrāyanī-Samhitā of Black Yajurveda*, Four volumes, Leipzig.
f. R. Roth and W.D. Whitney (ed.), 1856, *The Atharvaveda Samhitā*, School of the Shaunakas, Berlin.
g. Theodor Aufrecht (ed.), 1877, *The Ṛgveda or Rik Samhitā: Hie Hymnen des Ṛgveda*, Two volumes, Second edition, Bonn.
h. Theodor Benfey (ed.), 1848, *Samavedarcikam : Die Hymnen des Samveda*, Leipzig.
i. Albrecht Weber (ed.), 1852, *The Vājasaneyī Samhitā in the Mādhyandina Śakhā*, London.
j. Albrecht Weber (ed.), 1871-72, *Die Taittirīya Samhitā*, Indische Studien, volumes xi & xii, Leipzig.

4. Arthur A. Macdonell, 1900, *A History of Sanskrit Literature*, D. Appelton and Company, New York, p. 63.
5. Ram Prakash, Dr., 2012, *Guru Virajānand Daṇḍī: Life and Philosophy of a Grammarian par Excellence*, Satyarth Prakashan, Kurukshetra, pp. 92-108 and 145-161.
6. Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāsyabhūmikā*, ed. Rajvir Shastri, 1976, Arsh Sahitya Prachar Trust, Delhi, in all 35 topics have been dealt with and 790 quotations of different authorities have been incorporated in this work.
7. Dayanand Saraswati, 1972, *Yajurvedabhāsyam*, part-I, Vaidik Yantralaya, Ajmer, p. 1.
8. Bhagvadatta ed., November 1980, *Rishi Dayanand ke Patra aur Vijñāpana*, part 1, Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Bahalgarh, Vijñāpana on p. 256.
9. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāsyabhūmikā: Atha Saṁkṣepato Bhāsyakaraṇaśaṅkāsamādhānādi-viṣayaḥ*, p. 250.
10. *Ibid.*
11. Yudhishthira Mimamsaka (ed.), 1980, *Ṛṣi Dayānanda Saraswatī ke Patra aur Vijñāpana*, part-I, Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Bahalgarh, Sonepat, p. 89.
12. Dayanand Saraswati, 1972-74, *Yajurvedabhāsyam* (vols. 1 to 4), Vaidik Yantralaya, Paropkarini Sabha, Kesaraganj, Ajmer.
13. cf. Yāska, 2002, *The Nighaṇṭu and the Nirukta* (tr. Lakshman Sarup), Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 13.12.
14. Dayanand Saraswati, 1959, *Satyarth Prakash* (ed. Swami Vedanand), chapter 7, Virjanand Vaidik Sansthan, Ghaziabad, p. 176.
15. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāsyabhūmikā, Atha Vedānāṁ Nityatvavicāraḥ*, p. 25; ...अत ईश्वरोक्तत्वान्नित्यधर्मकत्वाद् वेदानां स्वतःप्रामाण्यं सर्वविद्यावत्त्वं सर्वेषु कालेष्वव्यभिचारित्वान्नित्यत्वं च सर्वैर्मनुष्यैर्मन्तव्यमिति सिद्धम्।
16. *Ibid., Atha Granthaprāmāṇyāprāmāṇya-viṣayaḥ*, p. 213; ये स्वतःप्रमाणभूता मन्त्रभागसंहिताख्याश्चत्वारो वेदा उक्तास्तद्भिन्नास्तद्व्याख्यानभूता ब्राह्मणग्रन्था वेदानुकूलतया प्रमाणमर्हन्ति। तथैवैकादशशतानि सप्तविंशतिश्च वेदशाखा वेदार्थव्याख्याना अपि वेदानुकूलतयैव प्रमाणमर्हन्ति।.....

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17. Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter 7, p. 178.
18. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāsyabhūmikā, Atha Vedotpattiviṣayaḥ*, p. 15; अतः किं सिद्धम्! अग्निवायुरव्याङ्गिरो मनुष्यदेहधारिजीवद्वारेण परमेश्वरेण श्रुतिर्वेदः प्रकाशीकृत इति बोध्यम्।
19. *Ibid.*, p. 15; विदन्ति जानन्ति, विद्यन्ते भवन्ति, विन्दन्ति विन्दन्ते, लभन्ते, विन्दते विचारयन्ति सर्वे मनुष्याः सर्वाः सत्यविद्याः यैर्येषु वा तथा विद्वांसश्च भवन्ति ते 'वेदाः'।
    cf., *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter 7, pp. 174-175.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 15; वेदेषु शब्दार्थसम्बन्धाः परमेश्वरादेव प्रादुर्भूताः तस्य पूर्णविद्यावत्त्वात्।
21. *Ibid., Atha Brahmavidyāviṣayaḥ*, p. 66.
22. *Ibid., Atha Paṭhanpāṭhanaviṣayaḥ Saṁkṣepataḥ*, p. 248; यद्यत् किंचिद्भूगोलमध्ये पुस्तकान्तरेषु हृदयान्तरेषु वा सत्यविद्याविज्ञानमभूत् भवति भविष्यति च, तत् सर्वं वेदादेव प्रसृतमिति विज्ञेयम्। कुतः? यद्यद्यथार्थं विज्ञानं तत्तदीश्वरेण वेदेष्वधिकृतमस्ति। तद्द्वारैवाऽन्यत्र कुत्रचित् सत्यप्रकाशो भवितुं योग्यः।
23. Yāska, *op.cit.*, 1.12.
24. *Ibid.*, 5.21,
25. *Ibid.*, 2.1.
26. *Vyākarana-Mahābhāsyam* (ed. Guruprasad Shastri), 1999, chapter 3, on Pāṇini 3.1.109, Pratibha Prakashan, Delhi, p. 198 and again in chapter-6 on Pāṇini 6.1.207, p. 723.
27. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāsyabhūmikā, Atha Vedaviṣayavicāraḥ*, p. 57; ...नैते श्रुतितः श्रवणमात्रेणैव तर्कमात्रेण च पृथक् पृथक् मन्त्रार्थाः निर्वक्तव्याः। किन्तु प्रकरणानुकूलतया पूर्वापरसम्बन्धेनैव नितरां वक्तव्याः।... यः कश्चिदनूचानो विद्यापारगः पुरुषोऽभ्यूहति वेदार्थमभ्यूहते प्रकाशयते, तदेवार्षमृषिप्रोक्तं वेदव्याख्यानं भवतीति मन्तव्यम्।
28. See Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter 1, where hundred plus names and epithets of *Paramātmā* have been explained.
    Also, *Ṛgvedādibhāsyabhūmikā, Atha Praśnottaraviṣayaḥ Saṃkṣepataḥ*, p. 270; ...वेदवेदाङ्–गोपाङ्गब्राह्मणग्रन्थेष्वग्निशब्देनेश्वरभौतिकार्थयोर्व्याख्यानस्य विद्यमानत्वात्।... तथा च येऽग्न्यादयः शब्दार्थाः संसारे प्रसिद्धाः सन्त्येतैः सर्वैरीश्वरप्रकाशः क्रियते।
29. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāsyabhūmikā, Atha Vedaviṣayavicāraḥ*, p. 51; देवशब्दे दिवुधातोर्ये दशार्थास्ते संगता भवन्तीति।... एवं गौणमुख्याभ्यां हेतुभ्यामुभयत्र देवतात्वं सम्यक् प्रतीयते।
30. *Ibid., Vyākaraṇaniyamaviṣayaḥ*, p. 276; 'अर्थगत्यर्थः शब्दप्रयोगः' इति भाष्यसूत्रम्। लौकिकवैदिकेषु शब्देषु सार्वत्रिकः समानोऽयं नियमः।... 'बहवो हि शब्दा एकार्था भवन्ति। तद्यथा – इन्द्रः, शक्रः, पुरुहूतः, पुरन्दरः, कन्दुः, कोष्ठः, कुसूल इति। एकश्च शब्दो बह्वर्थः। तद्यथा– अक्षाः, पादाः, माषाः', सार्वत्रिकोऽयमपि नियमः। यथाग्न्यादयः शब्दा वेदेषु बह्वर्थवाचकास्त एव बहव एकार्थाश्च।।
31. *Ibid.*, pp. 285-286; ...अथ यस्य विशेषपदार्थो न समुत्थितः कथं तत्र भवितव्यम्? "यन्न विशेषपदार्थसमुत्थं प्रत्ययतः प्रकृतेश्च तदूह्यम्" – प्रकृतिं दृष्ट्वा प्रत्यय ऊहितव्यः, प्रत्ययं दृष्ट्वा प्रकृतिरूहितव्या।... यत् विशेषात्पदार्थान्न सम्यगुत्थितमर्थात्प्रकृतिप्रत्ययविधानेन... कार्यमाश्रित्य धातुप्रत्ययानुबन्धान् जानीयात्।
32. Yāska, *op. cit.*, 2.16.
33. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāsyabhūmikā, Atha Vedaviṣaya-vicāraḥ*, pp. 46-47.
34. *Mādhavīya Dhātuvṛtti* (ed. Vijayapal Vidyavaridhi), 2002, Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Revali, Sonipat, p. 508; दिवु–क्रीडाविजिगीषाव्यवहारद्युति–स्तुति–मोद–मद–स्वप्नकान्तिगतिषु।
35. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāsyabhūmikā, Atha Vedaviṣayvicāraḥ*, pp. 44-46.
36. *Ibid., Atha Vedasaṁjñā-vicāraḥ*, p. 61.
37. Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash, Svamantavyāmantavyaprakāśaḥ*, pp. 585-86;
    See also *Brahmanic Citations* (ed. Vishvabandhu), 1966, VVRI, Hoshiarpur, p. 658; मनसा हि पुरुषो यज्ञमभिगच्छति। तैत्तिरीय संहिता 5,1,3,2; p. 660; 'यज्ञो वै देवानामात्मा। माध्यन्दिन शतपथ 9,3,2,7; यज्ञो वै श्रेष्ठतमं कर्म। माध्यन्दिन शतपथ 7.2.2.4 and 7.3.1.34 and p. 661. यो वै विष्णुः स यज्ञः। माध्यन्दिन शतपथ 5, 2, 3, 6.
38. *Mādhavīya Dhātuvṛtti* (ed. Vijayapal Vidyavaridhi), p. 372- यज देवपूजासङ्गतिकरणदानेषु।
39. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāsyabhūmikā, Atha Pañcamahāyajñaviṣayaḥ*, p. 196.
40. *Ibid., Atha Saṁkṣepato Bhāsyakaraṇaśaṅkāsamādhānādi-viṣayaḥ*, pp. 257-262. Also see *Satyarth*

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*Prakash*, pp. 37, 110 and 373.

41. Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter 3, pp. 69-70. *Ṛgvedādibhāsyabhūmikā, Athādhikārānadhikāraviṣayaḥ Saṁkṣepataḥ*, pp. 241-243.
42. Yāska, *op.cit.*, 7.6; पुरुषविधाः स्युरित्येकम्। चेतनावद्वद्धि स्तुतयो भवन्ति।
43. *Ibid.*, 7.7; अपुरुषविधाः स्युरित्यपरम्।
44. *Ibid.*; अपि वोभयविधाः स्युः।
45. *Ibid.*; अपि वा पुरुषविधानामेव सतां कर्मात्मानः एते स्युः।
46. Vishvabandhu, *Ṛgveda*, with the Bhāṣyas of Skanda Swami and Udgitha, the Vyākhyā by Venkaṭa-Mādhava and Mudgala's *Vṛtti* (part 1-7), V.V.R.I., Hoshiarpur (1965), part 1, p. 4; एवं सर्वमन्त्राणां कर्मांगत्वसिद्ध्यर्थे यतो बोद्धव्योऽर्थः, अतः ऋग्वेदस्यार्थबोधार्थम् अस्माभिर्भाष्यं करिष्यते।
47. Ramnath Vedalankar, 1980, *Vedabhāsyakāroṁ kī Vedārtha-Prakriyāyeṁ*, V.V.R.I., Hoshiarpur, pp. 11-12.
48. *Ṛgveda*, 5.82.5
49. *Yajurveda*, 30.3
50. Ramnath Vedalankar, *op. cit.*, Preface, pp. 6-7.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 47.
52. *Nirukta*, 3.6 and 3.12 where Ṛgveda 3.31.2 and 1.164.21 have been explained respectively.
53. See Ramnath Vedalankar, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-51.
54. Dayanand, *Ṛgvedādibhāsyabhūmikā, Athopāsanāviṣayaḥ*, p. 123; ...एकशब्देनाप्यनेकार्थग्रहणाच्च...।
55. Sāyana, *Ṛgvedabhāsya*, 10.92.8 and 10.98.4; ...इन्द्रः परमेश्वरः...
    Dayanand, *Yajurvedabhāsya*, 19.3; ...यः इन्दति परमैश्वर्यवान् भवति स इन्द्रः परमेश्वरः...
56. *Mādhyandina Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (ed. Chandradhar Sharma), (Saṁvat 1994), Achyut Granthmala, Kashi, 8.5.3.2; अथ यः स इन्द्रोऽसौ स आदित्यः; 4.6.7.11; इन्द्र इति ह्येतमाचक्षते यः एषः (सूर्यः) तपति; 3.4.2.2; इन्द्रः सर्वा देवता इन्द्रश्रेष्ठा देवाः इति।
    *Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā* (ed. L.V. Schroeder), 1923, Leipzig, 1.10.16; असौ वा आदित्य इन्द्रो, रश्मयः क्रीडयः (मरुतः); 2.2.9; इदं वा इन्द्रस्य घर्मश्च सूर्यश्च, इदमस्य मन्युश्च, मनश्चेदमस्येन्द्रश्चेन्द्रियं च, इदमस्यार्कश्चाश्वमेधश्च, एतानि वै सर्वाणीन्द्रोऽभवत्; 2.2.8; इन्द्र इन्द्रियस्य प्रदाता;
    *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, 14.2.2.6; अयं वा इन्द्रो योऽयं (वातः) पवते; 11.6.3.9; स्तनयित्नुरेवेन्द्रः
    *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* (ed. Kashinath Shastri), 1896, with Sayana-bhashya, Anandashram, Poona, 3.38; इयं (पृथिवी) वा इन्द्रो मघवा विरप्शी।
57. *Mādhyandina-Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, 6.1.1.2; स योऽयं मध्ये प्राणः। एष एवेन्द्रस्तानेष प्राणान्मध्यत इन्द्रियेणैन्द्ध; 10.4.1.6 and 12.9.1.13; मन एवेन्द्रः।
    *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa of the Sāmaveda* (ed. Raghuvir and Lokesh Chandra), 1954, Nagpur, 1.320-321; स यो मनसश्च वाचश्च स्वरो जायते स इन्द्रः।
58. *Taittirīya Samhitā* with English translation (ed. A.B. Keith), 1914, Cambridge, Massachusets, Harward Oriental Series, 2.3.6.2; अयं वा इन्द्रो राजाऽयमिन्द्रोऽधिराजोऽसाविन्द्रः स्वराडिमानेव लोकान् स्वेन भागधेयेनोपधावति,...; *Mādhyandina Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, 10.4.1.5; इन्द्रः क्षत्रम्;
    *Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā*, 1.9.6; यतरस्मिन् खलु वै संग्राम इन्द्रो भवति स जयति।
59. *Taittirīya Samhitā*, 3.3.7.3; इन्द्रस्य वा एषा यज्ञिया तनूर्यद् यज्ञः;
    *Kāṭhaka Samhitā* (ed. Damodar Satvalekar), 1942, Swadhyaya Mandal, Pardi, 7.10 and 37.8; इन्द्रो यजमानः।
60. *Ṛgveda*, 1.89.10
61. Dayanand, *Ṛgvedādibhāsyabhūmikā, Athālaṁkārabhedaviṣayaḥ Saṁkṣepataḥ*, p. 288.
62. Yāska, *op. cit.*, 13.12;, न तु पृथक्त्वेन मन्त्रा निर्वक्तव्याः। प्रकरणश एव तु निर्वक्तव्याः।
63. Dayanand, *Ṛgvedādibhāsyabhūmikā, Athopāsanāviṣayaḥ*, (tr. Parmanand, 1981), Meharchand Lachhmandas, Delhi, Worship, p. 221.
64. See Monier Willams, 1899, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, Preface To The New Edition, Oxford University Press, London, p. ix
65. *Ibid.*, pp. ix-x, footnote 4

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66. *Ibid.*, pp. ix-x.
67. Dayanand, *Ṛgvedādibhāṣyabhūmikā, Atha Saṁkṣepato Bhāṣyakaraṇaśaṅkāsamādhānādiviṣyaḥ*, p. 250.
68. *Ibid.*, *Atha Vedaviṣaya-vicāraḥ*, p. 31.
69. *Ibid.*, p. 45.
70. Yāska, *op.cit.*, 2.16.
71. Ramnath Vedalankar, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-39.
72. Dayanand, *Ṛgvedādibhāṣyabhūmikā, Atha Pratijñāviṣayaḥ Saṁkṣepataḥ*, pp. 263-64.
73. *Yajurvediya KāṇvaSamhitā* along with the Bhāṣyās of Sāyana and Anandbodha (ed. B.R. Sharma, 1992), 12.2, Vedic Sanshodhan Mandal, Poona; युञ्जाथां रासभं युवमस्मिन् यामे वृषण्वसू। अग्निं भरन्तमस्मयुम्।।
74. *Ibid.*, 12.3; योगेयोगे तवस्तरं वाजेवाजे हवामहे। सखाय इन्द्रमूतये।।
75. Dayanand, *Ṛgvedādibhāṣyabhūmikā, Grantha-saṁketa-viṣyaḥ*, p. 291
76. Ramnath Vedalankar, *op. cit.*, p. 56.
77. *Ibid.*, p. 57
78. *Nirukta*, 13.12

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# CHAPTER 26

# Swami Dayanand's Vedabhāshya and the Application of Vedāṅgas

*Gyan Prakash Shastri*

The Vedas, the source of divine knowledge, though pre-historic, are ever-relevant. Hence, the need for their correct interpretation and the proper use of all techniques and tools cannot be over-emphasised. Focusing on the concept of *Vedapuruṣa*, Pāṇinīya Śikṣā mentions Vedāṅgas i.e., the supporting tools for interpreting the mantras. These are – Chandas as the feet of the *Vedapuruṣa*, Kalpa as its hands, Jyotiṣa its eyes, Nirukta its ears, Śikṣā its nose, and Vyākaraṇa its mouth.[1] The significance attached to feet and other limbs in the human body is equated to these six limbs mentioned for the interpretation of mantras. This description helps one understand the critical importance of these six Vedāṅgas or the Vedic limbs in interpreting the Vedas, and that neglecting them would lead to a failure in decoding the valid meanings of the Veda mantras.

## CHANDAS

In the absence of any means to record one's thoughts in a written form, humans resorted to the poetic element of language to communicate the acquired intellectual wealth to the later generations. This method of poetic expression was called Chanda or song. The most ancient heritage of mankind, Ṛgveda too, is poetic. In view of the fact that poetic expression captivates the human mind, Pāṇini in the opening chapter of his Śikṣā, has declared Chandas, the feet of the Vedas.[2] Perhaps Veda might not have reached us in their original form had they not been composed in Chanda. Therefore, it is quite appropriate to call Chanda – the feet of the Vedas.

Regarding the relevance of Chanda in interpretation of mantras, the statement of the ancient commentator of the Vedas, Acharya Yāska is worth mentioning.

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Establishing the meaningful relationship between the devatās and their Chandas, and explaining with reference to three *devatās,* Agni, Indra and Āditya - he aligns Gāyatrī Chanda to the earth-abiding Agni,[3] *Triṣṭup* to the sky-abiding Indra[4] and *Jagatī* Chanda to Dyusthānī Āditya.[5]

Acharya Yāska, while discussing *Jātavedas,* says:

*Tadekameva jātavedasaṁ gāyatraṁ tṛcaṁ daśatayīṣu vidyate*
*Yattu kincidāgneyaṁ tajjātavedasānāṁ sthāne yujyate*

Ṛgveda has only one sūkta pertaining to *Jātavedas devatā* in the Gāyatrī Chanda.[6] But any Āgneya sūkta enshrined in the Gāyatrī Chanda is also used for the *Jātavedas* as well. Acharya Skandaswami opines that mantras enshrined in the Gāyatrī Chanda are used for *Jātavedas,* even if their devatā is not *Jātavedas.* On other hand, *Jātavedas* mantras enshrined in other Chandas are not appropriated.[7]

Acharya Yāska interprets Chanda as *Chandāsi chādanāt*[8] i.e., it is called Chandas as it covers. It is not clear here as to what do they cover? Responding to this, Acharya Skandaswami states that there is no mantra which is not covered by Chanda. Brāhmaṇa too affirms this notion in the statement that even the devatās immortalised themselves by encapsulating their powers in the mantras of a signified Chanda. This in reality is the existence of Chanda.[9] Acharya Durg's statement; *Nācchandasi vāguccarati,* no speech can be uttered in the absence of Chanda further ascertains this notion.[10]

There exists an intimate relationship between devatā and Chanda as devatā represents the meaning of mantra. In the opinion of Yāska, though Chanda may not be clearly beneficial in interpreting a mantra, yet it plays a role in understanding the meaning. It is similar to the a flag of a country. As, we can identify the country by its flag, similarly, we tend to identify the devatā by a particular Chanda. In this way, one can identify Agni by *Gāyatrī Chanda,* Indra by *Triṣṭup* and Āditya by *Jagatī.* Thus a Chanda directs towards the import of a mantra.

Sāyaṇa, in Ṛgvedabhāṣyopakrmaṇikā, has not only described in detail the number of Chanda in Ṛgveda, but has also detailed the exact number of characters in various Chandas.[11] In the present treatise quoting Brāhamaṇa, he states that one who performs yajña or teaches devoid of the knowledge of ṛṣī, Chanda and devatā attains stunted growth, degrades himself morally and becomes sinful.[12] Therefore, one should recite the name of a ṛṣī, Chanda and devatā.[13] Concluding this episode, Sāyaṇa states that all these six Vedāṅgas are factors favourable for Vedic interpretations.[14] However, Sāyaṇa fails to appropriate the utility and value, traditionally accorded to Chanda from the point of view of *mantrārtha.* As far as the applicative aspect of Chanda is concerned, Sāyaṇa has not expounded the significance of Chanda in his commentaries of the Vedas.

Dayanand says about Chanda that "the Gāyatrī Chanda in the act of performing rites is accepted as devatās, such as *agni* etc. Therefore, any Chanda appropriated to *agni* is in fact dedicated to *agni.*"[15] Swamiji has thus integrated both the Chanda as well as the devatā, and therefore one can extract the devatās by the Chandas such as, *agni* from the Gāyatrī. Swami Dayanand pursuing Yāska's tradition confirms to the significance of Chanda from the point of view of *mantrārtha.* But this impact is very nominal.

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Swami Dayanand asserts that there is no difference between Chanda and the Mantra as claimed by Max Müller and strongly affirms that Chanda, Mantra, Śruti, and Nigama are synonymous. Chanda holds plural signification for both Vedic Gāyatrī and temporal āryā etc. Moreover it also bears an independent signification.[16] He adds to the given context that, "Chandas are the Vedas because of bliss encapsulated, having the ability to eradicate suffering caused by ignorance. The knowledge of the Vedas leads a person towards supreme knowledge leading to bliss and one becomes learned, therefore, the Vedas are entitled to be called Chandas."[17]

Chanda is the word formative body of mantra. According to Swami Dayanand Saraswati, the Chanda is mentioned along with the mantra because, the recitative ability of the mantra leads to the knowledge of Chanda. Moreover, there is also a reference to Svara such as, 'ṣaḍaja' etc., indicating the notes for the recitation of these Mantras.[18] This clarifies that Swami Dayanand Saraswati's Devatā and Chanda being cohesive, amount to the fact that the reference to the Devatā leads to deciphering the signification of mantra, he does not assign any role to Chanda in the interpretation of a mantra. Here Swami Dayanand seems to agree with Skandaswami. Swami Dayanand's stance regarding this is quite pragmatic. He does not acknowledge any role for Chanda in *mantrārtha* but for him the knowledge of Chanda is relevant for the recitation of mantras in proper notes. In the opening of every sūkta[19] of Ṛgveda and every mantra of Yajurveda that he commented upon, Swami Dayanand Saraswati has mentioned the Chanda and its note. In this way he has tried to eliminate any impropriety corrupting the meaning of mantras.

Acharya Yudhishthira Mimamsaka assigns a very subtle role to Chanda in Mantrārtha. He states that even the evidences of the seven doctrines propounded by the ancient Acharyas affirm that the *Pāda-vibhāga* (meteric division) of the Ṛk mantras should appropriate in their interpretation. In the absence of the knowledge of metre, there cannot be the knowledge of meteric division and therefore, it is necessary to have the knowledge of Chanda to understand the subtle meaning of the Vedas.[20]

Based on the above-mentioned opinions of Yāska, Skandaswami, Dayanand, Pāṇini, Venkaṭamādhava, Jaimini and others, it can be said that though, there is no decisive role of Chanda in the *mantrārtha*, yet its role in signification cannot be completely ruled out. It can be decisively emphasised however, that unlike Vyākaraṇa and Nirūkta, Chanda does not impact meaning.

## KALPA

The age in which the scholarly society saw the need for Kalpa literature pertaining to ceremonial representation by large number of sūtras, and witnessed its taking shape in textual formation, was largely yajña centric. Therefore Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa[21] dared to assign the supreme status of glorious *karma* to yajña, in its oblations. In those times both yajña and religion came to assume a synonymous denotation, and yajña was regarded as the basis of all advancements. Therefore, on one hand, yajña such as aśvamedha and gomedha gained popularity, on the other hand, Acharyas too began speculating upon puruṣamedha. In those times renouncing a material object for any deity was considered

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to be a yajña.[22] It could be concluded that the belief system of that age rested on the thought that offering *āhuti* to *agni* (homa) and performing yajña would lead to the welfare of the entire mankind and it continued to be the life style of people.

Where on one hand Kalpa as per Archarya Sāyaṇa is yajña centric, on the other hand, as per Swami Dayanand Saraswati it illuminates the competency of *mantrārtha*. Sāyaṇa defining Kalpa states, *Kalpyate samarthyate yāgaprayogo'tra.*[23] In other words, Sāyaṇa believes Kalpa to be an approbation of multifarious yājñik practices. Swami Dayanand states, *Kalpā mantrārthasāmarthyaprakāśakāḥ*,[24] meaning that the texts which reveal the signification of *mantrārtha* are called Kalpa.

As per Sāyaṇa and other Acharyas of the yājñik tradition, Kalpa mainly refers to a body of yajña centric texts along with the essence of other similar ethologies in its embodiment. Kalpa comprises texts bearing four disciplines – Śrautasūtra, Gṛhyasūtra, Dharmasūtra and Śulbasūtra. Since Śulbasūtra is assimilated into Śrautasūtra, Kalpa literature, as per their opinion is reduced to three. Kalpa texts are accepted as a part of the Brāhmaṇa grantha, and it is presumed that Kalpasūtras were created by the Acharyas to fill the void left over by the Brāhmaṇa granthas.

Śrautasūtra expounds the practice of Śruti canonical yajña and appropriation of respective mantras, whereas, Gṛhyasūtra contains discourse on yajña and rites to be observed by the householder and the Dharmasūtra is edified on the attributes of class system, rights of governance and ruling over subjects.

The appropriation of Brāhmaṇavākya is categorised into three, *vidhivacana, arthvādavacana* and *anuvādavacana.*[25] The second mode of Brāhmaṇa granthas (Arthavāda) has four parts, *Stuti, Nindā, Parakṛti, Purākalpa.*[26]

Brahmāṇḍa purāṇa quotes the directions of Brāhmaṇa granthas that *hetū* (cause or reason), *nirvacana* (explanation and interpretation of technical term), *nindā* (censor or upbraiding), *praśansā* (praise), *sanśaya* (doubt), *vidhi* (mthod), *purākṛti* (beyond rituals), *purākalpa* (before ceremonial rites or sacrificial rites in former times), *vyavadhāraṇa* (special definition), *kalpanā* (composition or creation) are ten modes or techniques of a Brāhmaṇa.[27] But literature of Kalpa is rather a formless canonical text of deeds or performances and rituals. Keeping in mind the directness and simplicity of performance of rites and ritualism, Kumaril Bhatt claims that, Kalpa can help in the performance of yājñik deeds, even in the absence of the Veda, but Yajña cannot be performed merely with the mantra and Brāhmaṇa in the absence of Kalpa.[28] In other words it was declared that yajñas can be performed in the absence of the Veda, but not Kalpa. The permeation of this ideation in that age led Kalpa to the allotment of a distinguished position in the Vedāṅgas.

Acharya Sāyaṇa narrating the context of the utility of Kalpa questions about Āśvalāyana, whether it emulates *mantrakrama* (assortments of incantation) or the Brāhmaṇas?[29] And further suffices with the reply that *mantrakrama* originated from the sequence of Brahmayajñādi, not from the sequence of rites connected with the observance of any yajña. Brahmayajña has thus been quoted, "self cultivation of incantative practice of even a single *Ṛcā* (hymn) is Brahmayajña. Therefore the sanctity of Brahmayajña is preserved by following the sequence of Veda mantras in its performance."[30] When the entire *mantrakāṇḍa* is appropriated one should abide by the

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tradition. Apart from this, Āśvalāyana appropriates specific or particular mantra based on *Śruti, liṅga* (gender), *vākya* (speech), *pramāṇa* (prosodical length of a vowel or the scale), and therefore there appears no detrimental dissociation of *mantrakrama.*

Thus the idea of appropriation by Kalpa surmises that the observance of ceremonial rites should have an appropriation of mantra. This leads us to conclude that the basis of appropriation is the signification of the mantra which may not be directly evident from the mantra itself. It also indicates that appropriations of mantras too are not eternal. Mantras were appropriated into *karmaviśeṣa* by the commentators who perceived yājñik elements or aspect in it, but an appropriation devoid of any other aspect other than that of yājñik held no significance for the commentators.

Swami Dayanand says about Kalpa that Brāhmaṇa granthas cannot be Vedas because they are also denoted as, *Itihāsa* (chronicle), *Purāṇa* (mythology), *Kalpa, gāthā* (ballad) and *nārāśansī.* They are not the words of God, but are interpretations or commentaries on Vedas by the Rishis. No sage other than Kātyāyana has provided support to their being the Vedas.[31] Clarifying the form of Kalpa, Swami Dayanand Saraswati expounds Kalpa to be the texts illuminating upon the competence and affordability of the *mantrārtha,* e.g. in Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, *Iṣe tvorje* refers to rain.[32]

The objective of Kalpa is ordained for appropriation. Swami Dayanand Saraswati states in this regard that his Vedabhāṣya would describe *karmakāṇḍa* with the help of words and their signification but would be devoid of the description of the Veda mantra observed in the ritualistic practices of Agnihotra to the Aśvamedha. Because the appropriation of the concerned rituals is stated in Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, Pūrvamīmānsā, Śrauta and Gṛhya sūtras etc., and repetition would open up chances of incorporating blemish or flaw in the *Bhāṣya* (commentary) like the texts by a soloist or amateur. The appropriated texts are therefore, suitable on the sound and solid renderings of the *mantrārtha* confirmed on the evidences of the Vedas.[33]

It can be concluded that Dayanand did not endorse the tradition of appropriation that was in vogue. The main reason behind his strong volition towards accepting the appropriation was that it was not the work of the Rishis, therefore, he clearly opined that its observance would cause blemish. Now the question arises whether Dayanand was anti-appropriation? No, not at all. He affirms that the basis of appropriation is *mantrārtha* and the validity of *mantrārtha* is authenticated by the Vedas. Therefore, the *mantrārtha* that conforms to its authority and evidence, is to be accepted.

Swami Dayanand Saraswati, by accepting the appropriation has come to acknowledge the objective of Kalpa cannon, and has affirmed that the logic of observance of practice and rituals should be conceived on the basis of Śatapathādi Brāhmaṇas, Pūrvamīmānsā, Śrauta and Gṛhya sūtras etc.

After analysing the philosophical doctrine of Dayanand, we now dwell upon its applicative aspect;

| Appropriation (Viniyoga) | Mantra |
|---|---|
| अथोत्तमकर्मसिद्ध्यर्थमीश्वरः प्रार्थनीय इत्युपदिश्यते<br>Athottamakarmasiddhyarthamīśvaraḥ prārthanīya ityupadiśyate | Yajur, 1.1 |

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| | |
|---|---|
| स यज्ञः कीदृशो भवतीत्युपदिश्यते Sa yajñaḥ kīdṛśo bhavatītyupadiśyate | Yajur, 1.2 |
| अत्र त्रिविधस्य प्रश्नस्य त्रीण्युत्तराण्युपदिश्यन्ते<br>Atra trividhasya praśnasya trīṇyuttarāṇyupadiśyante | Yajur, 1.4 |
| किंच तद्वाचो व्रतमित्युपदिश्यते Kiñca tadvāco vratamityupadiśyate | Yajur, 1.5 |
| केन सत्यमाचरितुमसत्यं त्यक्तुमाज्ञा दत्तेत्युपदिश्यते<br>Kena satyamācaritumasatyaṁ tyaktumājñā dattetyupadiśyate | Yajur, 1.6 |
| अथाग्निदृष्टान्तेन विद्वद्विद्यार्थिकृत्यमाह<br>Athāgnidṛṣṭāntena vidvadvidyārthikṛtyamāha | Ṛg, 2.1.1 |
| अथ प्रकृतविषये राजशिष्यकृत्यमाह Atha prakṛtaviṣaye rājaśiṣyakṛtyamāha | Ṛg, 2.1.4 |
| पुना राजशिष्यविषयमाह Punā rājaśiṣyaviṣayamāha | Ṛg, 2.1.9 |
| पुनरध्यापकविषयमाह Punaradhyāpakaviṣayamāha | Ṛg, 2.1.11 |
| पुना राजशिष्यविषयमाह Punā rājaśiṣyaviṣayamāha | Ṛg, 2.1.16 |

Swami Dayanand Saraswati has illustrated the subject or appropriation. Here in the given sūkta (canto) there can be more than one subjects, whereas, Sāyaṇa offers only one subject/appropriation of a sūkta. Listed below are the subjects/appropriation propounded by Sāyaṇa.

| Appropriation (Viniyoga) | Sūtra referred to |
|---|---|
| अत्रानुक्रमणिका - `त्वमग्ने जागतं तु' इति॥ प्रातरनुवाकाश्विनशस्त्रयोर्जागते छन्दसि इदमादिसूक्तद्वयस्य विनियोगः। `त्वमग्नेद्युभिरितिसूक्ते' (आश्व. श्रौ. 4.13) इतिसूत्रितत्वात्॥ उपाकरणोत्सर्जनयोरपि आद्या विनियुक्ता॥ Tvamagne jāgataṁ tu' iti. Prātaranuvākāśvinaśastrayorjāgate chandasi idamādisūktadvayasya viniyogaḥ. Tvamagne dyubhiritisūkte'(Āśva. Śrau. 4.13) Itisūtritatvāt. Upākaraṇotsarjanayorapi ādyā viniyuktā. | Ṛg 2.1 |
| प्रातरनुवाकाश्विनशस्त्रयोर्जागते छन्दसि अस्य विनियोगः। सूत्रं तु पूर्वसूक्ते एवोक्तम्। तथाचातुर्विंशिके तृतीयसवने जातवेदस्य निविद्धानीयम् इदम्। `यज्ञेन वर्धतेत्याग्निमारुतम्' (आश्व. श्रौ. 7.4) इति सूत्रितत्वात्। पृष्ठ्याभिप्लवषडहयोर्द्वितीयेऽहन्यपि जातवेदस्य निविद्धानम् इदम्। `चातुर्विंशिकं तृतीयसवनम्' इति चतुर्विंशादतिदिष्टत्वात्॥<br>Prātaranuvākāśvinaśastrayorjāgate chandasi asya viniyogaḥ. Sūtraṁ tu pūrvasūkte evoktam. Tathācāturvinśike tṛtīyasavane jātavedasya nivid'dhānīyam idam. Yajñena vardhatetyāgnimārutam. (Āśva. Śrau. 7.4) Iti sūtritatvāt. Pṛṣṭhyābhiplavaṣaḍahayordvitīye'hanyapi jātavedasya nividdhānam idam Cāturvinśikaṁ tṛtīyasavanam' iti caturvinśādatidiṣṭatvāt | Rg 2.2 |

The other commentators of the Vedas such as Skandaswami or Venkaṭamādhava or Mudgala do not display the subject at the beginning of the mantra or sūkta. Upon a detailed analysis of the tradition of Vedabhāṣyakāras it can be surmised that Swami Dayanand has not disregarded or neglected the tradition of subject/appropriation, but

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has tried to establish its basic form. The other commentators do conform to the need of subject/appropriation, but do not abide by the rules or guidelines of the tradition of appropriation set for *mantrārtha.*

## JYOTIṢA

Like the other Vedāṅgas, Jyotiṣa (astronomy or rather the Vedic calendar) too, is a manifestation for and from the Vedas. Acharya Manu states that the past, present and future are established or proved in the Vedas.[34] The knowledge pertaining to the planetary place and position and their future positioning is referred to in Indian literature as Jyotiṣa Śāstra. The term jyotiṣa is derived from the root *dyuta dīptau* meaning *agni* (fire), *prakāśa* (luminosity) and *nakṣatra* (constellation) and is said to be derived from *Jyotiṣāṁ sūryādigrahāṇāṁ bodhakaṁ śāstram.* As per the Śabdakalpadruma, the Vedāṅga written for the purport to describe the movement of luminary sun, eclipse etc. are named Jyotiṣa.

Just as the cockade of a peacock and the jewel-stone of a snake are placed at the highest place of body (forehead), similarly the position of Jyotiṣa too in the Vedāṅga is at the very top. In other words, Jyotiṣa is supreme among the Vedāṅgas.[35] As we know, astronomy pertains to the study of planets and heavenly bodies and can help us decipher the place and position of planets and stars along with their movement, perimeter or dimension and distance. The knowledge of Jyotiṣa śastra helps one calculate the activity or movements taking place in the sky. Since time immemorial, man has been able to predict sunrise, sunset, lunar eclipse, solar eclipse, position of planets, their alignment, seasonal variations, time pertaining to seasonal variation in exact manner and is able to extract necessary information required for a safe and proper life.

Jyotiṣā is divided into three parts - *Siddhānta gaṇita* (fundamental mathematics), *Tantra gaṇita* (tantra mathematics) and *Karaṇa gaṇita* (karaṇa mathematics).

Tantra and Karaṇa jyotiṣa texts were created thousands of years after the advent of the Vedas, whereas, Siddhānta gaṇita is grounded in the Vedas. It could be surmised that *Jyotiṣa śāstra* was created to know about astronomy, planets or heavenly bodies but in due course of time it came to be used in the science pertaining to yajña and time. Acharya Sāyaṇa agrees in Ṛgvedabhāṣyopakramaṇikā that the main purpose of Jyotiṣa is to interpret and analyse the correct timings of Yajña. Had there not been the jyotiṣa, the understanding and interpretation of subjects such as, auspicious time or moment, planets and heavenly bodies, seasonal variations and solstices etc. would have been topsy-turvy. Therefore, as per Sāyaṇa its knowledge is of great use and benefit to the subjects related to yajña.[36]

Swami Dayanand enumerates Jyotiṣa among the Vedaṅgās. He categorises Jyotiṣa as *aparā* lore or knowledge, as per the Muṇḍaka classification of knowledge as *parā* and *aparā*.[37] He further states in this regard that this mathematical knowledge is known as Jyotiṣaśāstra in Vedāṅga. Referring to mantra 18.25 of Yajurveda, he affirms that mantras like this are the very basis of *gaṇita vidyā* in the texts of Jyotiṣa śāstra.[38]

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Analysing and discussing the authoritative and non-authoritative evidences, Swami Dayanand believes the Vedas to be self-validated and self-authoritative. He asserts that the different branches sprouting off from the Vedas and the entire literature on the Vedāṅgas including Jyotiṣa are valid and authentic only on account of being in harmony with the Vedas, and not otherwise. In his opinion, jyotiṣā rests its credibility on the Vedas.[39] He further establishes about Jyotiṣa śāstra that the *Chanda śāstra* (canon on metre) of Piṅgala Acharya and *Jyotiṣa śāstra* (canon on 'astronomy' or rather the Vedic calendar) of Vaśiṣtha only are to be accredited.[40] Referring to the un-validated or non-authoritative canon, Dayanand states that the books such as '*Muhurttajanmapatraphalādeśavidhāyaka* and texts such as *Muhurttacintāmaṇy*' are basically invalid.[41]

Swami Dayanand Saraswati acknowledges Jyotiṣa as the astronomical science, pertaining to heavenly bodies or planets. It can also be said that there is a close affinity between mathematical science and jyotiṣā śāstra. Swami Dayanand has no objection to the Jyotiṣa propounded on the principles of mathematical science, but is strongly opposed to the very notion of making birth charts, and calculating planetary positions for birth chart analysis and astrological predictions, which he opines are contrary to the teachings of the Vedas.

In Swami Dayanand's opinion, the astronomer is of immense significance. He believes that a king, having the ability to treat and respect the righteous astronomer and to punish the unrighteous, is fit to reign.[42] Similarly, he states elsewhere, that the conduct of a king should be like that of the Almighty God. As the Lord grants inferior life form to the unrighteous, whereas, to the righteous, He grants high life form of a physician, astronomer, teacher and examiner etc. the king too should follow the conduct.[43]

As far as, the *mantrārtha* is concerned, neither Dayanand nor any other commentator has acknowledged Jyotiṣa śāstra for *mantrārtha* unlike the role of Vyākaraṇa (linguistic analysis of grammar) or Nirukta (explanation of difficult Vedic words). Swami Dayanand Saraswati acknowledges the use of Jyotiṣa śāstra for the observance of naming ceremony or baptism (*nāmakaraṇa*). He states in this regard that on reciting the mantra *Om prajāpataye svāhā* one should offer oblation to the sacrificial fire or homa and thereafter mentioning the date and devatā of nakṣatra (constellation) of the child's birth, one should offer four sacrificial offerings to the agni with ghee (clarified butter) reciting the word svāhā. For example if someone is born in pratipadā and aśvini nakṣatra, then *Oṁ pratipade svāhā. Oṁ brahmaṇe svāhā. Oṁ aśvin'yai svāhā. Oṁ aśvibhyāṁ svāhā* is to be recited.[44] In the given exposition he refers to the lord of the time[45] as well as the deity of the nakṣatra.[46]

Based on the above exposition it can be said that Swami Dayanand Saraswati does not hold Jyotiṣa śāstra to be of much significance as a Vedāṅga in *mantrārtha.*

## ŚIKṢĀ

Among the six Vedāṅgas is *Śikṣā,* the science of proper articulation and pronunciation. Its origination is dated around 1000-500 B.C. As per the linguists, the objective of Śikṣā

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is *sāmānya svaravijñāna* (phonetics) and *swanimavijñāna* (phonology). Thus śikṣā means, *Śiksyante varṇā yayā śiksyate vā varṇānāmuccāraṇavidhiḥ yayā sā śikṣā.* The process that enables one to learn the varṇa (alphabet) along with its pronunciation and articulation (*uccāraṇa vidhi*) is termed as *Śikṣā.*

In ancient times, parents and teachers or the Acharyas used to impart the science of pronunciation and articulation to their wards and pupils. The recitation of *Vedamantras* (Vedic incantations) later came to be popularised as *varṇoccārana* (pronunciation and articulation of alphabets). The canon of śikṣā basically deals with the analysis of all the sounds. Earlier, this was conducted by *prātiśākhya.* The term *prātiśākhya* means the śāstra relating to the study of *tattatveda śāstra* (cannon or text). Many subjects branching out of the Vedic śākhā (section) such as, *karmakāṇḍa* (ritualism), conduct etc., were some of the independent traditions of the Vedic śākhā. *Prātiśākhya* did not cover these subjects, as they were more concerned with the correct recitation of Vedic mantras, Vedic code and inter-relationship between the *Sandhiprayukta varṇaparivartana* or *svaraparivartana* and subjects pertaining to *Chandovicāra* (contemplation on metre).

Subjects such as, pronunciation and articulation of the alphabets along with *Vyākaraṇa* (linguistic analysis of grammar) and *sandhi* were appropriated in the *prātiśākhāya.* Later on, the same procedure came into existence as a separate branch of knowledge known as śikṣā. It was such an important subject that many Acharyas dwelt upon its ideation, to establish its applicability in education. Udāyanāchārya has elaborated about sixty-one texts or canons of śikshā.[47]

Of the ones mentioned, only Pāṇini śikṣā is recognised as the Vedāṅga and out of the so called Pāṇini texts too, only the *sūtrātmaka* (aphoristic) scribed by Pāṇini is categorised as the Vedāṅga. The rest in verse are neither Pāṇinīya, nor a part of the Vedāṅga.[48] Śikṣā definitely does not have any role in the *mantrārtha* as such. Even then, accomplishment in *Śikṣā* is unavoidable and obligatory for proper *mantrārtha.* Keeping this in view, Swami Dayanand Saraswati has written about the Varṇoccāraṇaśikṣā in Pāṇini śikṣā.

## VYĀKARAṆA

It cannot be said for sure as to when did Vyākaraṇa (linguistics and analysis of grammar) manifest. Elements like name, recitation, narration, prefix, speech etc. can be known only to the one who is a brahman or a sage. Therefore, perhaps Acharya Bhartṛhari ascribed the word to brahma in his quote, *Anādinidhanaṁ brahma.* In this way, the word is acknowledged as brahma and its knower as a Brahman. One who is not a master of his mind is not a *manīṣī* (sage), therefore cannot be acquainted to or know this *śabdbrahma* (word brahma). The mantra further elaborates that speech has three forms, *parā* (speech in its absolute nature), *paśyantī* (the finest impulse of speech) and *madhyamā* (intermediate unexpressed state of sound), which are in *guhā* (secret or mysterious) location (*Hṛdayākāśa*). In other words they are *gūḍha* (hidden) and cannot be produced in the form of *dhvani* (sound). Only the fourth part of speech known as

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*vaikharī* (an articulate sound) is the power of speech for humans.[49] As per the Vedas, the wise, acquainted with the essential nature or the vital truth of the speech, is steady, thoughtful, brahman,[50] who in the later language is designated as *Vaiyākaraṇa* (grammarian).

Despite the above-mentioned description of Vyākaraṇa in the Vedas, the exact time-period of the beginning of the form of Vyākaraṇa available to us today, cannot be determined with surety. The following example from the Gopatha Brāhmaṇa, provides a glimpse of Vyākaraṇa in the times of Yāska-Pāṇini.

*Oṅkāraṁ pṛcchāmaḥ ko dhātuḥ? Kiṁ prātipadikam? Kiṁ nāmākhyātam? Kiṁ liṅgam? Kiṁ vacanam? Kā vibhaktiḥ? Kaḥ pratyayaḥ? Kaḥ svaraḥ upasargo nipātaḥ? Kiṁ vai vyākaraṇam? Ko vikāraḥ? Ko vikārī? Katimātraḥ? Kati varṇaḥ? Katyakṣaraḥ? Katipadaḥ? Kaḥ sanyogaḥ? Kiṁ sthānanādānupradānānukaraṇam?....Iti.*[51]

Based on the established technical terminology used in the field of Vyākaraṇa, it can be said that Vyākaraṇa was being used in a well-planned manner much before the Gopatha Brāhamaṇa. It can be indisputably said to have acquired the canonical form by then. Ancient grammarians, while expounding the many objectives of Vyākaraṇa, have also assigned the unblemished speech of words and letters as one of the essential objectives.[52]

The first objective of language is to ensure that the listener is able to receive the essence of what one intends to deliver. This demands correct pronunciation and articulation, failing which a word may be confused for another, leading sometimes to disastrous errors. Incorrect pronunciation could lead to flaws like the following: *svajana* (kith and kin) confused with *śvajana* (kuttā, dog), *sakala* (complete) with *śakala* (part) and *sakṛt* (once) with *śakṛt* (excreta or dung). The ancient thinkers therefore, paid a lot of attention to the development and teaching of Vyākaraṇa.

Vyākaraṇa is undoubtedly, essential for understanding the Vedas as well as for use in daily life. Underlining the significance of Vyākaraṇa with reference to the Vedas, Acharya Patañjali states that a brahman should selflessly study the Vedāṅgas along with the eternal Vedas, and Vyākaraṇa, is central to the six Vedāṅgas..[53] Hence, Vyākaraṇa is of supreme significance among all the Vedāṅgas.

Swami Dayanand Saraswati, while interpreting the Vedas, has made ample use of Vyākaraṇa. The following list can help us analyse, whether he has applied Vyākaraṇa to expound the meaning of a mantra or to establish a word, in his commentary on the Yajurveda:

| No. | Vyākaraṇa | Mantra | Use of Vyākaraṇa |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | (ईशत) ईष्टां समर्थो भवतु। अत्र लोडर्थे लङ्। बहुलं छन्दसि [अष्टा. 2.4.73] इति शपो लुगभावः (Īśata) īṣṭāṁ samartho bhavatu. atra loḍarthe laṅ. Bahulaṁ chandasi (Aṣṭādhyāyī 2.4.73) Iti śapo lugabhāvaḥ | Yaju. 1.1 | Rūpasid'dhi |
| 2. | (बह्वीः) बह्वयः अत्र। वा छन्दसि (अष्टा. 6.1.106) अनेन पूर्वसवर्णदीर्घादेशः (Bahvīḥ) bahvayaḥ atra. vā chandasi (Aṣṭādhyāyī 6.1.106) | Yaju. 1.1 | Rūpasid'dhi |

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| | Anena pūrvasavarṇadīrghādeśaḥ | | |
| 3. | (पञ्च) पञ्चभिरुक्षेपणादिभिः कर्मभिः। उक्षेपणमवक्षेपणमाकुञ्चनं प्रसारणं गमनमिति कर्माणि (वैशे. 1.7) अत्र 'सुपां सुलुग्' [अष्टा. 7.1.39] इति' भिसो लुक्॥ (Pañca) pañcabhirukṣepaṇādibhiḥ karmabhiḥ. Ukṣepaṇamavakṣepaṇamākuñcanaṁ prasāraṇaṁ gamanamiti karmāṇi (Vaiśe. 1.7) Atra 'supāṁ sulug' (Aṣṭādhyāyī 7.1.39) Iti' bhiso luk | Yaju. 1.9 | Rūpasid'dhi |
| 4. | (अभिविख्येषम्) अभितः सर्वतो विविधं पश्येयम्। अत्राभिव्योरुपपदे 'चक्षिङ्' इत्यस्याशीर्लिङ्ग्रार्धधातुकसंज्ञामाश्रित्य 'ख्याञ्'आदेशः। 'लिङ्ग्राशिष्यङ्' [अष्टा. 3.1.86] इत्यङ् सार्वधातुकसंज्ञामाश्रित्य च या इत्यस्य इय् आदेशः। सकारलोपाभाव इति (Abhivikhyeṣam) abhitaḥ sarvato vividhaṁ paśyeyam. Atrābhivyorupapade 'cakṣiṅ' ityasyāśīrliṅyārdhadhātukasanjñāmāśritya 'khyāñ'ādeśaḥ. 'Liṅyāśīṣyaṅ' (Aṣṭādhyāyī 3.1.86) Ityaṅ sārvadhātukasanjñāmāśritya ca yā ityasya iy ādeśaḥ. Sakāralopābhāva iti | Yaju. 1.11 | Rūpasid'dhi |
| 5. | (देवीः) दिव्यगुणयुक्ताः। अत्र सुपां सुलुग् [अष्टा. 7.1.39] इति पूर्वसवर्णादेशः (Devīḥ) divyaguṇayuktāḥ. Atra supāṁ sulug (Aṣṭādhyāyī 7.1.39) Iti pūrvasavarṇādeśaḥ | Yaju. 1.12 | Rūpasid'dhi |
| 6. | (युष्माः) ताः पूर्वोक्ता आपः। अत्र व्यत्ययः। वा छन्दसि सर्वे विधयो भवन्ति [अष्टा. 1.4.9 भा.] इति शसः सकारस्य नत्वाभावश्च (Yuṣmāḥ) tāḥ pūrvoktā āpaḥ. Atra vyatyayaḥ. Vā chandasi sarve vidhayo bhavanti (Aṣṭādhyāyī 1.4.9 Bhāṣya) iti śasaḥ sakārasya natvābhāvaśca | Yaju. 1.13 | Rūpasid'dhi |
| 7. | (देवयज्यायै) देवानां विदुषां दिव्यगुणानां वा यज्या सक्रिया तस्यै। छन्दसि निष्टर्क्य0 (अष्टा. 3.1.123) इति देवयज्याशब्दो निपातितः (Devayajyāyai) devānāṁ viduṣāṁ divyaguṇānāṁ vā yajyā sakriyā tasyai. Chandasi niṣṭarkya. (Aṣṭādhyāyī 3.1.123) Iti devayajyāśabdo nipātitaḥ | Yaju. 1.13 | Rūpasid'dhi |
| 8. | (शमीष्व) दुःखनिवृत्तये सुखसम्पादनार्थं कुरुष्व। शमु उपशमे इत्यस्माद् बहुलं छन्दसि [अष्टा. 2.4.73] इति श्यनो लुक्। तुरुस्तु शम्यम. (अष्टा. 7.3.95) इतीडागमः। महीधरेणात्र शपो लुगित्यशुद्धं व्याख्यातम्। (Samīṣva) duḥkhanivṛttaye sukhasampādanārthaṁ kuruṣva. Samu upaśame ityasmād bahulaṁ chandasi (Aṣṭādhyāyī 2.4.73) Iti śyano luk. Turustu śamyama. (Aṣṭādhyāyī 7.3.95) Itīḍāgamaḥ. Mahīdhareṇātra śapo lugityaśud'dhaṁ vyākhyātam | Yaju. 1.15 | Arthasid'dhi |
| 9. | (सुशमि) सुष्ठु दुःखं शमितुं शीलं धर्मः पदार्थानां साधुकरणं वा यस्य तत्। शमित्यष्टा. (अष्टा. 3.2.141) अनेन शमेर्घिनुण्। इदमपि पदमुवटमहीधराभ्यामन्यथैव व्याख्यातम्। (Suśami) suṣṭhu duḥkhaṁ śamituṁ śīlaṁ dharmaḥ | Yaju. 1.15 | Rūpasid'dhi |

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| | padārthānāṁ sādhukaraṇaṁ vā yasya tat. Śamityaṣṭā. (Aṣṭādhyāyī 3.2.141) Anena śamerghinuṇ. Idamapi padamuvaṭamahīdharābhyāman'yathaiva vyākhyātam | | |
| 10. | (प्रतिगृभ्णातु) प्रतिगृह्णाति। अत्र हृग्रहोर्भश्छन्दसि हस्य भत्वं वक्तव्यम् (अष्टा. 8.2.32) इति हकारस्य स्थाने भकारः लडर्थे लोट् च (Pratigṛbhṇātu) pratigṛhṇāti. Atra hṛgrahorbhaśchandasi hasya bhatvaṁ vaktavyam (Aṣṭādhyāyī 8.2.32) Iti hakārasya sthāne bhakāraḥ laḍarthe loṭ ca | Yaju. 1.16 | Rūpasid'dhi |
| 11. | (देवयजम्) देवान् विदुषो दिव्यगुणान् जयति सङ्गतान् करोति येन यज्ञेन स देवयट् तम्। अत्र अन्येभ्योऽपि दृश्यन्ते [अष्टा. 3.2.75] इति सूत्रेण कृतो बहुलम् [अष्टा.भा.वा. 3.2.113] इति वार्त्तिकेन च करणे विच् प्रत्ययः (Devayajam) devān viduṣo divyaguṇān jayati saṅgatān karoti yena yajñena sa devayaṭ tam. Atra an'yebhyopi dṛśyante (Aṣṭādhyāyī 3.2.75) Iti sūtreṇa kṛto bahulam (Aṣṭādhyāyī Bhāṣya Vārttika 3.2.113) Iti vārttikena ca karaṇe vic pratyayaḥ | Yaju. 1.17 | Rūpasid'dhi |
| 12. | (ब्रह्मवनि) ब्राह्मणं विद्वांसं वनति तम्। छन्दसि वनसनरक्षिमथाम् (अष्टा. 3.2.27 ) अनेन ब्रह्मोपपदे वनधातोरिन् प्रत्ययः। सुपां सुलुग्0 [अष्टा. 7.1.39] इत्यमो लुक् च। (Brahmavani) brāhmaṇaṁ vidvānsaṁ vanati tam. Chandasi vanasanarakṣimathām (Aṣṭādhyāyī 3.2.27) Anena brahmopapade vanadhātorin pratyayaḥ. Supāṁ sulug. (Aṣṭādhyāyī 7.1.39) Ityamo luk ca | Yaju. 1.17 | Rūpasid'dhi |
| 13. | (सजातवनि) जातं जातं वनति स जातवनिः समानश्चासौ जातवनिस्तम्। समानस्य छन्दस्यमूर्द्धप्रभृत्युदर्केषु (अष्टा. 6.3.83) अनेन समानस्य सकारादेशः (Sajātavani) jātaṁ jātaṁ vanati sa jātavaniḥ samānaścāsau jātavanistam. Samānasya chandasyamūrd'dhaprabhṛtyu-darkeṣu (Aṣṭādhyāyī 6.3.83) Anena samānasya sakārādeśaḥ | Yaju. 1.17 | Rūpasid'dhi |
| 14. | (पार्वतेयी) पर्वतस्य मेघस्य दुहितेव या सा पार्वतेयी वृष्टिः। पर्वत इति मेघनामसु पठितम्। (निघं. 1.10) पर्वतस्येयं घनपङ्क्तिः पार्वती तस्यापत्यं दुहितेव पार्वतेयी वृष्टिः। स्त्रीभ्यो ढक् (अष्टा. 4.1.120) अनेन ढक्। (Pārvateyī) parvatasya meghasya duhiteva yā sā pārvateyī vṛṣṭiḥ. Parvata iti meghanāmasu paṭhitam. (Nighaṇṭu 1.10) Parvatasyeyaṁ ghanapaṅktiḥ pārvatī tasyāpatyaṁ duhiteva pārvateyī vṛṣṭiḥ. Strībhyo ḍhak (Aṣṭādhyāyī 4.1.120) Anena ḍhak | Yaju. 1.19 | Rūpasid'dhi |
| 15. | (धाम्) दधामि। अत्र छन्दसि लुङ्लङ्लिटः [अष्टा.3.4.6] इति वर्त्तमाने लुङ्ङडभावश्च (Dhām) dadhāmi. Atra chandasi luṅlaṅliṭaḥ (Aṣṭādhyāyī 3.4.6) Iti varttamāne luṅṅaḍabhāvaśca | Yaju. 1.20 | Rūpasid'dhi |
| 16. | (भेः) बिभीहि। अत्र लोडर्थे लङ्। बहुलं छन्दसि [अष्टा. 2.4.73] इति शपो लुक् (Bheḥ) bibhīhi. Atra loḍarthe laṅ. Bahulaṁ chandasi | Yaju. 1.23 | Rūpasid'dhi |

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| | (Aṣṭādhyāyī 2.4.73) Iti śapo luk | | |
| 17. | (अध्वरकृतम्) अध्वरं करोति येन सामग्रीसमूहेन तम्। अत्र कृतो बहुलम् [अष्टा.भा.वा. 3.3.113] इति वार्त्तिकेन करणे क्विप्। (Adhvarakṛtam) adhvaraṁ karoti yena sāmagrīsamūhena tam. Atra kṛto bahulam (Aṣṭādhyāyī Bhāṣya Vārttika 3.3.113) Iti vārttikena karaṇe kvip | Yaju. 1.24 | Rūpasid'dhi |

Swami Dayanand has used Aṣṭādhyāyī and Uṇādi 375 and 57 times respectively in the commentary of the first 13 chapters of the Yajurveda, while in the commentary of its chapters 14-26, Aṣṭādhyāyī has been used about 83 and Uṇādi 10 times. For chapters 27-40, Uṇādi has been used only once and Aṣṭādhyāyī 7 times. It can be seen from the list given above that Swamiji initially made ample use of Vyākaraṇa, but reduced it gradually. He believed that it was important to provide the readers with information related to Vyākaraṇa, in the initial stages. In the later parts however, he avoided being repetitive. Thus combining Aṣṭādhyāyī and Uṇādi, Swamiji has used Vyākaraṇa 530 times in his commentaries on the Yajurveda.

We can evaluate the use of Vyākaraṇa in his commentaries, on the basis of information given below about his Ṛgveda Bhāṣya:

| No. | Mantrapada | Mantra | Use of Vyākaraṇa |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | (ऋत्विजम्) य ऋतौ ऋतौ प्रत्युत्पत्तिकालं संसारं सङ्गतं यजति करोति तथा च शिल्पसाधनानि सङ्गमयति सर्वेषु ऋतुषु यजनीयस्तम्। ऋत्विग्दधृग्0 (अष्टा. 3.2.59) अनेन कर्त्तरि निपातनम्, तथा कृतो बहुलमिति कर्मणि वा। (Ṛtvijam) ya ṛtau ṛtau pratyutpattikālaṁ sansāraṁ saṅgataṁ yajati karoti tathā ca śilpasādhanāni saṅgamayati sarveṣu ṛtuṣu yajanīyastam. Ṛtvigdadhṛg. (Aṣṭādhyāyī 3.2.59) Anena karttari nipātanam, tathā kṛto bahulamiti karmaṇi vā | Ṛg. 1.1.1 | Rūpasid'dhi |
| 2. | (विश्वतः) सर्वतः सर्वेषां जलपृथिवीमयानां पदार्थानां विविधाश्रयात्। षष्ठ्या व्याश्रये (अष्टा. 5.4.48) इत्यनेन तसिः प्रत्ययः। (Viśvataḥ) sarvataḥ sarveṣāṁ jalapṛthivīmayānāṁ padārthānāṁ vividhāśrayāt. Ṣaṣṭhyā vyāśraye (Aṣṭādhyāyī 5.4.48) Ityanena tasiḥ pratyayaḥ | Ṛg. 1.1.4 | Rūpasid'dhi |
| 3. | (दमे) दाम्यन्त्युपशाम्यन्ति दुःखानि यस्मिंस्तस्मिन् परमानन्दे पदे। दमुधातोः हलश्च। (अष्टा. 3.3.121) अनेनाधिकरणे घञ्प्रत्ययः॥ (Dame) dāmyantyupaśāmyanti duḥkhāni yasminstasmin paramānande pade. Damudhātoḥ halaśca. (Aṣṭādhyāyī 3.3.121) Anenādhikaraṇe ghañpratyayaḥ | Ṛg. 1.1.8 | Rūpasid'dhi |
| 4. | (सचस्वा) समवेतान् कुरु। अन्येषामपि दृश्यते (अष्टा. 6.3.137) इति दीर्घः। (Sacasvā) samavetān kuru. An'yeṣāmapi dṛśyate (Aṣṭādhyāyī 6.3.137) Iti dīrghaḥ | Ṛg. 1.1.9 | Rūpasid'dhi |
| 5. | (अरंकृताः) अलंकृता भूषिताः। संज्ञाछन्दसोर्वा कपिलकादीनामिति वक्तव्यम्। (अष्टा. 8.2.18) इति लत्वविकल्पः। (Araṅkṛtāḥ) alaṅkṛtā bhūṣitāḥ. Sanjñāchandasorvā kapilakādīnāmiti vaktavyam. (Aṣṭādhyāyī | Ṛg. 1.2.1 | Rūpasid'dhi |

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| | 8.2.18) Iti latvavikalpaḥ | | |
| 6. | (श्रुधी) श्रावयति वा। अत्र बहुलं छन्दसि। (अष्टा. 2.4.73) इति विकरणाभावः। श्रुशृणुपृकृवृभ्यश्छन्दसि। (अष्टा. 6.4.102) अनेन हेर्धिः। (Srudhī) śrāvayati vā. Atra bahulaṁ chandasi. (Aṣṭādhyāyī 2.4.73) Iti vikaraṇābhāvaḥ. Sruśṛṇupṛkṛvṛbhyaśchandasi. (Aṣṭādhyāyī 6.4.102) Anena herdhiḥ | Ṛg. 1.2.1 | Rūpasid'dhi |
| 7. | (अच्छा) साक्षात्। निपातस्य च। (अष्टा. 6.3.136) इति दीर्घः। (Acchā) sākṣāt. Nipātasya ca. (Aṣṭādhyāyī 6.3.136) Iti dīrghaḥ | Ṛg. 1.2.2 | Rūpasid'dhi |
| 8. | (इन्द्रश्च) अन्तरिक्षस्थः सूर्य्यप्रकाशो वायुर्वा। इन्द्रियमिन्द्रलिङ्गमिन्द्रदृष्टमिन्द्रसृष्टमिन्द्रजुष्टमिन्द्रदत्तमिति वा। (अष्टा. 5.2.93) इति सूत्राशयादिन्द्रशब्देन जीवस्यापि ग्रहणम्। (Indraśca) antarikṣasthaḥ sūryyaprakāśo vāyurvā. Indriyamindraliṅga- mindradṛṣṭamindrasṛṣṭa-mindrajuṣṭamindradattamiti vā. (Aṣṭādhyāyī 5.2.93) Iti sūtrāśayādindraśabdena jīvasyāpi grahaṇam | Ṛg. 1.2.6 | Arthasid'dhi |
| 9. | (इत्था) धारणपालनवृद्धिक्षयहेतुना। था हेतौ च छन्दसि। (अष्टा. 5.2.26) इति थाप्रत्ययः। (It'thā) dhāraṇapālanavṛd'dhikṣayahetunā. Thā hetau ca chandasi. (Aṣṭādhyāyī 5.2.26) Iti thāpratyayaḥ | Ṛg. 1.2.6 | Arthasid'dhi |
| 10. | (मित्रावरुणौ) पूर्वोक्तौ। देवताद्वन्द्वे च। (अष्टा. 6.3.26) अनेनानङादेशः। (Mitrāvaruṇau) pūrvoktau. Devatādvandve ca. (Aṣṭādhyāyī 6.3.26) Anenānaṅādeśaḥ | Ṛg. 1.2.8 | Rūpasid'dhi |
| 11. | (ऋतावृधौ) ऋतं ब्रह्म तेन वर्धयितारौ ज्ञापकौ जलाकर्षणवृष्टिनिमित्ते वा। अत्रान्येषामपि दृश्यत इति दीर्घः। (Ṛtāvṛdhau) ṛtaṁ brahma tena vardhayitārau jñāpakau jalākarṣaṇavṛṣṭinimitte vā. Atrān'yeṣāmapi dṛśyata iti dīrghaḥ | Ṛg. 1.2.8 | Rūpasid'dhi |
| 12. | (आशाथे) व्याप्नुतः। छन्दसि लुङ्लङ्लिटः। (अष्टा. 3.4.6) इति वर्त्तमाने लिट्। वा छन्दसि सर्वे विधयो भवन्तीति नुडभावः॥ (Āśāthe) vyāpnutaḥ. Chandasi luṅlaṅliṭaḥ. (Aṣṭādhyāyī 3.4.6) Iti varttamāne liṭ. Vā chandasi sarve vidhayo bhavantīti nuḍabhāvaḥ | Ṛg. 1.2.8 | Rūpasid'dhi |
| 13. | (पुरुभुजा) पुरूणि बहूनि भुञ्जि भोक्तव्यानि वस्तूनि याभ्यां तौ। पुर्विति बहुनामसु पठितम्। (निघं. 3.1) भुगिति क्विप्प्रत्ययान्तः प्रयोगः। सम्पदादिभ्यः क्विप्। रोगाख्यायां0। (अष्टा. 3.3.108) इत्यस्य व्याख्याने। (Purubhujā) purūṇi bahūni bhuñji bhoktavyāni vastūni yābhyāṁ tau. Purviti bahunāmasu paṭhitam. (Nighaṇṭu 3.1) Bhugiti kvippratyayāntaḥ prayogaḥ. Sampadādibhyaḥ kvip. Rogākhyāyāṁ. (Aṣṭādhyāyī 3.3.108) Ityasya vyākhyāne | Ṛg. 1.3.1 | Rūpasid'dhi |
| 14. | (चनस्यतम्) अन्नवदेतौ सेव्येताम्। चायतेरन्ने ह्रस्वश्च। (उणा. 4.200) अनेनासुन् प्रत्ययान्ताच्चनस्शब्दात् क्यच्प्रत्ययान्तो नामधातोर्लोटि मध्यमस्य द्विवचनेऽयं प्रयोगः॥ (Canasyatam) annavadetau sevyetām. Cāyateranne hrasvaśca. (Uṇādikoś 4.200) Anenāsun pratyayāntāccanas'śabdāt kyacpratyayānto nāmadhātorloṭi madhyamasya dvivacaneyaṁ prayogaḥ | Ṛg. 1.3.1 | Rūpasid'dhi |

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| 15. | (नासत्या) न विद्यतेऽसत्यं कर्मगुणो वा ययोस्तौ। नभ्राण्नपान्नवेदा0। (अष्टा. 6.3.75)<br>(Nāsatyā) na vidyatesatyaṁ karmaguṇo vā yayostau. Nabhrāṇnapānnavedā. (Aṣṭādhyāyī 6.3.75) | Ṛg. 1.3.3 | Rūpasid'dhi |
| 16. | (अण्वीभिः) कारणैः, प्रकाशावयवैः किरणैरङ्गुलिभिर्वा। वोतो गुणवचनात्। (अष्टा. 4.1.44) अनेन ङीषि प्राप्ते व्यत्ययेन ङीन्।<br>(Aṇvībhiḥ) kāraṇaiḥ, prakāśāvayavaiḥ kiraṇairaṅgulibhirvā. Voto guṇavacanāt. (Aṣṭādhyāyī 4.1.44) Anena ṅīṣi prāpte vyatyayena ṅīn | Ṛg. 1.3.4 | Rūpasid'dhi |
| 17. | (दाश्वांसः) सर्वस्याभयदातारः। दाश्वान् साह्वान् मीढ्वांश्च। (अष्टा. 6.1.12) अनेनायं दानार्थाद्दाशेः क्वसुप्रत्ययान्तो निपातितः।<br>(Dāśvānsaḥ) sarvasyābhayadātāraḥ. Dāśvān sāhvān mīḍhvānśca. (Aṣṭādhyāyī 6.1.12) Anenāyaṁ dānārthāddāśeḥ kvasupratyayānto nipātitaḥ | Ṛg. 1.3.7 | Rūpasid'dhi |
| 18. | (आगन्त) आगच्छत। अयं गमेर्लोटो मध्यमबहुवचने प्रयोगः। बहुलं छन्दसि। (अष्टा. 2.4.73) इत्यनेन शपो लुकि कृते तप्तनप्तनथनाश्च। (अष्टा. 7.1.45) इति तबादेशे पित्वादनुनासिकलोपाभावः।<br>(Āganta) āgacchata. Ayaṁ gamerloṭo madhyamabahuvacane prayogaḥ. Bahulaṁ chandasi. (Aṣṭādhyāyī 2.4.73) Ityanena śapo luki kṛte taptanaptanathanāśca. (Aṣṭādhyāyī 7.1.45) Iti tabādeśe pitvādanunāsikalopābhāvaḥ | Ṛg. 1.3.8 | Rūpasid'dhi |

Swami Dayanand Saraswati has used Aṣṭādhyāyī 444 times and Uṇādi 166 times in the first maṇḍala of Ṛgveda, whereas the usage of Vyākaraṇa in the second maṇḍala is 4 times, nil in the third and fourth maṇḍalas, once in the 5th maṇḍala, nil again in the 6th, and merely twice in the 7th maṇḍala. Thus Swamiji has used Vyākaraṇa 617 times in his commentary on the Ṛgveda. In all, Swamiji has used Vyākaraṇa 1,147 times while doing *mantrārtha* (incantative interpretations) of Ṛgveda and Yajurveda.

Thus, Swamiji assigns and grounds the very essence and existence of Vedāṅga to Vyākaraṇa. Whereas the articulation or pronunciation and Vyākaraṇa is concerned, appropriating the ninth part of Vedāṅgaprakāśa as *Sauvara* Swamiji states that voice or articulation is important for the Vedas. It is surprising however, that Swamiji has not mentioned even once, the manner of articulation in the Yajurveda, and has made only one reference to it in Ṛgvedabhāṣya.[54]

Speaking about the role of vocalisation in Ṛgvedādibhāṣyabhūmikā, he states that one should acquire knowledge about notes and speech that are *udātta* (accent, sublime), *anudātta* (accentless or with neutral accent) *svarit, ekśruti* (monotonous intonation) etc., in the process of studying Vyākaraṇa, and learn about Chanda and ṣaḍaja and other notes in the octave from the *Piṅgala sūtras* (metric ceremonial rites) etc. For example, in अग्निमीळे0 *(Agnimīle)* the sign of *anudātta* (accentless or no accent) is on sound *a*, whereas there is no sign on *Gni* because it is *udātta* (of acute accent), and the sign of *svarita* (accent) on *Mī*, *pracaya* (accumulated tone) and monotonous intonation on *Ḍe* should be kept in mind.

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With the view that the *bhāsyas* (commentaries) should not end up becoming difficult and cumbersome, Swamiji avoided deliberating upon accent in his commentaries. It can be said that Swami Dayanand Saraswati has not much commented upon Vyākaraṇa as a tool for interpretation, in his commentaries, validating it on the ground of the grammarians such as Patañjali and Pāṇini.

Swami Dayanand Saraswati, appropriating the significance of Vyākaraṇa, states that to understand and study the Vedas one must first study and learn Vyākaraṇa, Aṣṭādhyāyī" and Mahābhāṣya. After Vyākaraṇa, one should deliberate upon the study of Nighaṇṭū, Nirukta, Chanda and Jyotiṣa and thereafter, Ṣaḍdarśana followed by Brāhamaṇa granthas so as to do *Vedārtha*, or should attain the knowledge of the Vedas from the texts of scholars, who after studying all these Shāstras have written commentaries on the Vedas.[55]

## EXAMPLES OF SWAMI DAYANAND'S USAGE OF VYĀKARAṆA

Vyākaraṇa can be used in two ways for *mantrārtha* – firstly by expounding the *sūtras* (maxims) of Vyākaraṇa in interpretation; and secondly, by interpreting on the basis of *dhātus* (verbs), without detailing the principles of Vyākaraṇa. Hence after enlisting the first part above, an attempt to analyse the second style of interpretation of the mantras by Swamiji is given below.

***Bhujyum***

Acharya Skandaswami, Veṇkaṭa, Udgītha, Sāyaṇa and Mudgala have interpreted the term *Bhujyu* as the name of a son of the king *Tugra*,[56] whereas, Dayanand interprets the word as one who preserves and enjoys sensual pleasures based on the root word √*bhuja* meaning one who fulfils and observes.[57]

Though, Veṇkaṭa and Sāyaṇa have interpreted it as saviour at one or two places, but in general they have used it as a proper noun. In this way, Swamiji has indirectly rejected the chronicle in the interpretation of the mantra on the basis of Vyākaraṇa.

***Tugraḥ***

Skandaswāmi, Sāyaṇa and Mudgala consider *Tugra* a king,[58] whereas, Swami Dayanand designates *Tugra* as a commander, originating from the term √*Tuja* meaning the slayer of enemies.[59]

***Pajriyāya***

Various acharyas have considered *Pajra* to mean Aṅgirasa[60] and *Pajriya* to be the son of same Aṅgirasa. Skandaswami has elsewhere expounded the term *pajriya* to have originated from the *annavācaka pāja*, which means the one endowed with distinguished victual. However, Dayanand considers the term *pajra* to signify a rank, and anyone belonging to that rank is termed as, *pajriya*.[61] In this way, Swamiji by suffixing *rak* from root *pada* and by interrupting letter from *d* to *j* has established the term *pajra*.

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***Kakṣīvate***

Acharyas, other than Dayanand, have denoted '*Kakṣīvānkā*' to a rishi (sage) named *Kakṣīvānnāma.*[62] Mudgala has in this context narrated a tale.[63] The story goes that once Aṅgarāja along with his wives was engaged in pleasure-sports in the river Gaṅgā. At that time Rishi Dirghatamā was thrown by some people in the river. The rishi reached the place of King's pleasure-sport by a boat. The king, considering the sage to be all-knowing, pointing towards one of his wives, requested him to beget him a son, since he had none. The sage agreed to the request. The queen, despite consenting, sent one of her maids named Uśik thinking the old sage unworthy of her. The sage purified her with the incantative powers and made her *ṛṣi patnī* (his wife). Later the king Aṅgarāja accepted the son *Kakṣīvānko,* born out of this union or *niyoga* as his son, who later performed many ceremonial rites and yajña and was granted the youthful maiden Vṛcayā by the deity Indra.[64]

Acharya Dayanand however, gives an altogether different interpretation. Based on Nighaṇṭū, he explains *kakṣa* to be 'finger', thus he considers it to be the scholarly person who has reached the apex of learning.[65] It is ironical that interpretations like the one by Mudgala have tainted and disgraced our rich and glorious heritage. A clear halt to such unethical and unscrupulous legends is only possible by supporting the tradition created by Dayanand. But his path is based on *Dhātuja siddhānta,* a tradition which needs proper nourishment.

***Cyavānāt***

Skandaswami, Veṇkaṭa, Sāyaṇa and Mudgala have interpreted the term, *Cyavanyā cyavāna* as a rishi named *Cyavana.*[66] Narrating a story, Skanda says that as atonement to the offence committed by king *Śāryāta* in jest, he gave his daughter *Sukanyā* to the old sage *Cyavana.* Looking at her plight, Ashwani Kumaras implored her to join them, discarding her old husband, but she insisted on not forsaking the one chosen by her father. At this, the Ashwani Kumaras made the sage *Cyavana* youthful. Swami Dayanand has denounced thisnarrative on the grounds of the glorification of Ashwani Kumaras. He has derived *cyavana* from √*cyuṅgatau* and interpreted it as resort and flight.[67]

Skanda's narrative supports unequal marriage in terms of age, which is quite unacceptable. Swami Dayanand opines that if Vedas are filled with such concocted details of fabliau, then the very objective of their sanctity is corrupted; therefore Swami Dayanand Saraswati has interpreted the Vedas in a manner beneficial and easily accessible to the masses on the basis of Vyākaraṇa.

***Viśpalāṁ***

Basically the term *Viśpalā* has been interpreted by the commentators as, *Chinnajaṅghā vālī yoddhrī strī*[68] But the term *viśa* in the verse of *viśpalā* is interpreted by Dayanand as *prajā* (subjects) and therefore *viśpalā* is, 'the knowledge used to govern the subjects.'[69] The interpretation given by commentators from Skandaswami to Mudgala testify to temporal history, but only the interpretation offered by Dayanand grounded on Vyākaraṇa could secure it from the malefic intervention of chronicle.

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***Viśpalāvasū***

In the earlier context of Viśpalā, the commentators such as Sāyaṇa etc., have interpreted it as *Chinnajaṅghā vālī yoddhrī strī*.[70] But Sāyaṇa also interprets the term *viśpalā* in the given verse to be *viśa* i.e., *prajā*,[71] which is in line with the one propounded by Dayanand.

***Syāvāya***

Syāva has been interpreted by many commentators as a person suffering from leprosy.[72] But Swami Dayanand Saraswati interprets it as a wise man, based on the root √*śyaiṅgatau*. At another place, it has been interpreted as a cloud-coloured horse.[73]

***Atrye***

All the scholars and commentators from Skanda to Mudgala acknowledge the interpretation of the term *atri* as sage,[74] whereas, Dayanand considers *atri* to be a person who is devoid of *ādhyātamic, ādhibhautic* and *ādhidaivic* sufferings. Dayanand's stance is supported by Nirukta.[75] Yāska indicates the term *atri* to have been born out of *n+tri*,[76] thus, rightfully indicating as a person devoid of the three-fold suffering.

***Atri***

Though Sāyaṇa is aware of Yāska's stance of his interpretation of the term, he still affirms the term sage Atriya as the son of '*atri*'.[77] Whereas, Swami Dayanand interprets it on root word "*a*" and interprets it to be 'the one enjoying pleasures and happiness.'[78] Elsewhere, he has even interpreted the term to a person ever on excursion, ever vigorous and engrossed in all knowledge, and devoid of the three sufferings. This multifarious interpretation is owing to the vividness or variety in the root word that frames the term. Dayanand's interpretation, if verified by the Brāhamaṇa granthas, is bound to secure its undisputed acceptability.

***Divodāsam***

The above said term, *Divodāsa* has been interpreted as a sage *Divodāsa*.[79] However, Dayanand considers the term to have been framed by the combination of *diva* from *dhū* meaning luminosity or brilliance and *dāsa* from *dā*, thus interpreting it as the one who is illumined by righteousness and brilliance.[80] The above interpretations leads us to the understanding that the prior commentators have tried to align names with the chronicles, whereas, Dayanand discarded the historical projections to offer novel interpretations of the terms based on root and suffix.

***Dadhīcaḥ***

Many Indians are familiar with the chronicle of Dadhīci. Exploring its narratives, Skandaswami states that once *devas* (gods) tortured by a demon (*asura*) *Kāla kañja* went to Lord Brahmā seeking help. Lord Brahmā sent them to Dadhīca, who knowing their predicament, gave his life. Later *devas* (gods) collected his bones and used them to slay the *asura Kāla kañja*. All the commentators interpret the term to sage *Dadhīca*,[81] whereas

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Dayanand interprets it to the one who appreciates people with knowledge and righteousness.[82] Dayanand derives this word *Dadhīca* from the roots √*Dadhadhāraṇe*+√*añcugati* and translates *Dadhi* as the one who is the bearer of righteousness and knowledge and *Añcati* as the one who worships. Thus it means one who worships and appreciates the bearer of righteousness and knowledge.

It can be seen that Dayanand, in his interpretation, has indirectly made ample use of grammar and Pāṇini's root science.

The above description is bound to raise a question – is the method propounded by some earlier commentators pertaining to the mechanism of generating new words is correct, or Dayanand's mechanism of attempting to codify the *mantrārtha*? It can be stated in response that in the observance to the opinion of the prior scholars, the traditional belief seems to be preserved, yet the Vedas lose their credibility by becoming a mere chronicle.

As Vyākaraṇa is most important of the Vedāṅgas, similarly in its *aṅgas* such as *prakṛti* (*dhātu*, out of root), *pratyaya* (suffix), *ādeśa* (command), *āgama* (augment), *lopa* (omission), *varṇavikāra* (change of syllable), conjunction etc., the most important is *prakṛti* or *dhātu* (the root meaning). *Prakṛti* designates that, in which or from which, new words are generated. In this way, root words form the very soul of Vyākaraṇa. Dayanand's attempt to ground his interpretations on root words, not only offers a solution to the various interpretations of the Vedas but also attempts to nullify the various objections raised against the Vedas. This practice, though approved by the Vyākaraṇa, is unsafe. It could lead to the practice of evoking multiple interpretations based on root words, thereby leading to unwanted interpretation of mantras. Whether, it could add any signification to the mantras is somewhat doubtful, but the chances of *mantrārtha* being distorted are quite high.

Dayanand's erudition, the highest level of scholarly merit, and his vast learning, allow him to interpret the Vedas in a way that the followers of his path may not be able to do. Moreover, the interpretations offered by Dayanand have neither been validated nor challenged in over one hundred and twenty-five years, nor is there much chance of the same being attempted in future. Unless one is a rishi or an ascetic and a *bhūyovidya*, none should have the right to interpret the *mantrārtha* following the tradition of Yāska.

## NIGHAṆṬU AND NIRUKTA

Though Nirukta (explanation, etymological interpretation) is the interpretative text of Nighaṇṭu (glossary or traditional collection of words, grouped into thematic categories, often with brief annotations), yet this does not render it unimportant. Nirukta was assimilated into the Vedāṅgas, while Nighaṇṭu was not. This does not mean that its interpretative signification lost its validity. Almost all interpreters are of the opinion that most mantras tend to lose their relevance in the absence of Nighaṇṭu. For example, the word *Kaṇva*, is denoted by the dictionaries to be a sage with this name, whereas Nighaṇṭu assigns it to be a signifier of sagacity or brilliance.[83] In the absence of Nighaṇṭu, it would be difficult to understand the Vedas, therefore, it is equal in importance to Nirukta, even today.

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## NIRUKTA AND VYĀKARAṆA

The objective of both Nirukta and Nighaṇṭu is to safeguard the sanctity of the Vedas, and both are the protectors of and well-disposed to the service of the Vedas. Though, the objective of Vyākaraṇa is to safeguard the interest of the Vedas,[84] yet its nature is enshrined in the study of the root word, whereas, the objective of Nirukta lies in the signification or import. Yāska, affirming this states, *Arthanityaḥ parīkṣeta.*[85] It means that keeping in mind the framed terminology, one should ensure to testify its accent, because the *artha* (import) is always the core as compared to the *śabda* (the word or the term) itself, and the signification gets due weightage when the term acts as a signifier to the import.[86] It can thus be surmised that Vyākaraṇa, being an explanatory or interpretative text of the words or terms, is focused on the frames of corporeal body, whereas, Nirukta being about import or signification, is focused on the soul that keeps the frame alive.

Acharya Yāska establishing the process of Nirukta states, *Tadyeṣu padeṣu svarasanskārau samarthau prādeśikena guṇenānvitau syātāṁ tathā tāni nirbrūyāt. Athānanvitertheprādeśike vikārerthanityaḥ parīkṣeta.*[87] Thus wherever, Vyākaraṇa fails to establish its discipline, it crosses over to the domain of Nirukta for interpretation. Thus it can be affirmed that Nirukta is complementary to Vyākaraṇa whereas, Vyākaraṇa is the ground footing for Nirukta, as it is impossible to seek admittance into the latter in the absence of Vyākaraṇa.

### *Definition of Nirvacana*

Expounding the form of *nirvacana* (interpretation) Acharya Durg states, *Apihitasyārthasya parokṣavṛttāvatiparokṣavṛttau vā śabde niṣkṛṣya vigṛhya vacanaṁ nirvacanam.*[88] From the point of view of partial or complete derivation or etymology, the process of dividing the words and illuminating the hidden meaning of the complex term, so as to fully express the verb, is *nirvacana.* The act of dividing the word, so as to understand the import of the word on the basis of its etymology is *vigraha* (syllabic division). In the words of Rajvade, "*Nirvacana* is the name given to the act of disclosing or expressing fully the concerned or related words of any syllabic division on the basis of its etymology."[89] This leads us to surmise that the direct or indirect form of dividing the etymological words on the basis of its import is *nirvacana.*

### *The Frontiers of Nirvacana*

The legendary exponent of the science of *nirvacana,* Acharya Yāska makes ample use of *vā.* For example, *Agniḥ kasmād? Agraṇīrbhavati. Agraṁ yajñeṣu praṇīyate. Aṅgaṁ nayati sannamamānaḥ. Aknopano bhavatīti sthaulasṭhīviḥ. Na knopayati na snehayati. Tribhya ākhyātebhyo jāyate iti śākapūṇiḥ. Itādaktāt dagdhādvā nītāt. Sa khalveterakāramādatte gakāramanaktervā dahatervā nīhparaḥ.*[90]

The reoccurrence of *vā* (and / or) in the *Nirukta* of Yāska is to stay clear of any practice leading to the demarcating line of interpretation for any word. This should not lead us to believe that Yāska is unsure of his interpretation or is quoting any other

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Acharya (scholar). This tendency is reflected in the very first part of Nirukta where he offers an interpretation to Nighaṇṭu[91] and is to be found even more in the Brāhamaṇa granthas. Therefore, Yāska states about Brāhmaṇas, *Bahubhaktivādīni hi brāhmaṇāni bhavanti* – that the Brāhmaṇas attempt to portray an object in multifarious way. We can say that Brāhamaṇa granthas try to visualise the entire cosmos in every object, therefore, Vedas, are referred to as *Gostu mātrā na vidyate*, - which means that speech cannot be confined.[92] Hence, the exponents of Vyākaraṇa have appropriated *akṣara* to *brahma*.

It can be said that in order to comprehend the mantras, the ancient sages and ascetics did not stop at *mantrārtha* because they considered the Vedas to be the manifestation of Brahma itself.[93] The Vedas are an amalgamation of everything essential for the welfare of mankind. There are two ways of benefitting from them. The first way is of describing, and thus arriving at an affinity with, the subject matter. The ancient rishis did so. The second path is, of embodying the very form of a mantra, in the act of its interpretation.[94]

The Vedas are the embodiment of wisdom which cannot be attained in the absence of its interpretation. Therefore, the enterprise to expound its import has been in continuum since the ancient times, and attempts have been made in this direction, in various modes and forms, from Brāhamaṇa granthas to Śikṣā, Chandas, Jyotiṣa, Kalpa, Vyākaraṇa, Nighaṇṭu and Nirukta.

The above said modes, do offer themselves as tools of interpreting the Vedas in their own ways, yet, none of them is complete as a method in itself. Nevertheless, the mode that may be rightfully considered as totally dedicated to the service of Vedic interpretation, it is that of Nighaṇṭu and Nirukta. It strongly affirms that meaning cannot be suffixed or prefixed to extract the import of the Vedas in its absence.[95]

If any discipline can lead to the oceanic bounds of the import or meaning of the Vedas, it is Nirukta, as it offers various techniques and methods to unravel their depths. While the main consideration of other disciplines is limited to the superficial look of the word, Nirukta clearly expounds the *Arthanityaḥ parīkṣeta*.[96] Despite not being a fundamental text, but only a commentary on the Nighaṇṭu, Nirukta has occupied a place denied to any other discipline. The basis of this status is that the vision of Nirukta is focused on interpretation, and its unquenchable desire to seek the import has established Yāska to the distinguished position of the *Vedāchārya* (scholar of the Vedas). The parameters established or prescribed by Yāska are still looked upon with great esteem. The significance of the contribution made by Yāska can be determined by the fact that there is hardly any commentator who fails to refer to him in his interpretation of the Vedas.

The following table charts out the application of Vyākaraṇa, Nighaṇṭu and Nirukta in the Vedabhāṣhya by Swami Dayanand Saraswati:

| Veda | Nighaṇṭu | Nirukta | Aṣṭādhyāyī | Uṇādikoṣa |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yajurveda, chapter 1-13 | 339 | 89 | 375 | 57 |
| Yajurveda, chapter 14-26 | 102 | 2 | 83 | 10 |
| Yajurveda, chapter 27-40 | 52 | 4 | 07 | 01 |

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| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ṛgveda, first maṇḍala | 750 | 209 | 444 | 166 |
| Ṛgveda, second maṇḍala | 59 | 08 | 04 | 00 |
| Ṛgveda, third maṇḍala | 97 | 01 | 00 | 00 |
| Ṛgveda, fourth maṇḍala | 58 | 00 | 00 | 00 |
| Ṛgveda, fifth maṇḍala | 56 | 00 | 01 | 00 |
| Ṛgveda, sixth maṇḍala | 100 | 00 | 00 | 00 |
| Ṛgveda, seventh maṇḍala | 59 | 01 | 02 | 00 |
| **Total** | 1672 | 314 | 916 | 234 |

It is clear that Swami Dayanand Saraswati has relied largely on the Nighaṇṭu in his Vedabhāṣya; secondly on Pāṇini's Aṣṭādhyāyī, thirdly on Nirukta and fourthly on Uṇādikoṣa. Here it has to be kept in mind that without even referring to Vyākaraṇa, Swami Dayanand has largely made use of the root words of Pāṇini in *mantrārtha*. It is on the strong basis of root words that we find such a novelty in his interpretation.

## BRĀHAMAṆA GRANTHAS

Swami Dayanand Saraswati, commenting upon the role of Brāhamaṇa granthas in Ṛgvedabhāṣyabhūmikā, states that "the so called texts such as, Śatapatha Brāhamaṇa etc., are only an accessory to the Vedas, and stand validated and are congruent only on the authority of the Vedas."[97] At another place, Swamiji, highlighting the merit and significance of Vedavyākhyāna, opines that one would fail to grasp the illumined essence of the Vedas in any way, until one acquires a thorough knowledge of the texts vindicating the ultimate truth such as logic, reasonable understanding of Vedic words, Vedāṅgas such as Vyākaraṇa etc., Śatapatha Brāhamaṇa and texts such as, Pūrvamīmānsā etc., accompanied by the blessings of the Lord and company of learned scholars, wise men for the cleansing of the soul so as to understand the correct interpretation of the Vedic words.[98]

Swamiji, speaking about his own Bhāṣyas (commentaries), states that it has been well disposed to the congruency of the bhāṣya created by the ancient Acharyas whereas, the Bhāṣyas by Rāvaṇa,[99] Uvvaṭa, Sāyaṇa, and Mahīdhara are contrary both to the original verse and to those created by the Rishis. He further affirms that his bhāṣya is grounded on the Vedāṅgās, Aitareya, Śatapatha Brāhamaṇa granthas etc., and that the eternal expositions of the Vedas validate and render a uniqueness to his Vedabhāṣya.[100]

This confirms that in Dayanand Saraswati's opinion, the Brāhmaṇa granthas play a vital role in the interpretation of the Vedic mantras. An analysis of the use of Brāhmaṇa granthas in his *mantrārtha* is worth noting. Acknowledging the Brāhamaṇa of Yajurveda as *Śatapatha*, Swamiji has used Śatapatha 434 times for chapters 1-13 of Yajurveda, five times for chapters 14-26, and not even once for chapters 27-40. Thus in totality Swamiji expounds Brāhmaṇas about 439 times in the Yajurveda.

Whereas Ṛgveda is concerned, Swamiji has used Brāhamaṇa 41 times in the first maṇḍala. Out of which Śatapatha is mentioned 37 times, while Aitareya and Ṣadaviṇśa Brāhamaṇas are mentioned twice. He has also expounded Śatapatha once again in the

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seventh maṇḍala. Thus Swamiji has expounded Brāhamaṇa granthas 42 times in his commentary on the Ṛgveda to establish his *mantrārtha.* This further establishes that Swamiji has relied on Śatapatha more than the other Brāhamaṇa granthas. However, as his work progressed he moved over to Nighaṇṭu leaving the Brāhamaṇa. A similar trend is traced with Vyākaraṇa as well.

The main basis of Swamiji's *mantrārtha* is Nighaṇṭu followed by the Pāṇini Vyākaraṇa that too with a focus on root words. It can be concluded that the ground footing of Swamiji's Vedārtha is the root words of Vyākaraṇa. And in order to achieve its rightful interpretation, he also relies at places on Nighaṇṭu and Nirukta.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. *Pāṇinīyaśikṣā,* 41-42.
2. *Ibid.*, 41.
3. *Nirukta,* 7.8
4. *Ibid.*, 7.10
5. *Ibid.*, 7.1
6. *Ṛgveda,* 10.188.1. (This sūkta is of merely of three mantras).
7. *Skandabhāsya, Nirukta,* 7.20.
8. *Nirukta,* 7.12.
9. *Skandabhāsya, Nirukta,* 7.20.
10. *Durgavṛtti, Nirukta,* 7.12.
11. Sāyaṇa, *Ṛgvedabhāsyopakramaṇikā,* (Acharya Baldev Upadhyaya, 1985, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Sansthan, Varanasi, pp. 56-57).
12. *Ibid.*, p. 57
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*
15. Dayanand, *Ṛgvedādibhāsyabhūmikā, Vedanityatvavicāra,* Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Amritsar (1984), p. 70;
    *Atra karmakāṇḍe devatāśabdena vedamanrāyeṇāṁ grahaṇam. Gāyatyākādīni chandānsi hyagyāmidi-devatākhyānyeva gṛhyante, teṣāṁ karmakāṇḍādividheryoraśtakatvāt. Yasminmanrekā cāgniśabdārtha-pratipādanaṁ vartdate, sa eva manroyāgnidevato gṛhyate.*
16. Dayanand, *Ṛgvedādibhāsyabhūmikā, Vedaviṣayavicāra*
17. *Ibid.*
18. Dayananda, *Ṛgvedādibhāsyabhūmikā, Praśnottaraviṣaya*
19. *Yajurveda,* 1.6-8
20. Yudhishthira Mimamsaka, *Vedic-Chandomīmānsā,* Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Sonipat, p. 79.
21. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa,* 1.7.1.5 *Yajño vai śreṣṭhatamaṁ karma*
22. *Kātyāyana Śrautsūtra,* 1.2.2.
23. Sāyaṇa, *Ṛgvedabhāsyopakramaṇikā,* p. 50.
24. Dayanand, *op.cit., Vedasanjñāvicāraviṣaya*
25. *Nyāyadarśana,* 2.1.63 *Vidhyarthavādānuvādanavacanaviniyogāt*
26. *Ibid.*, 2.1.65, *Stutirnindā parakṛtiḥ purākalpa ityarthavādaḥ*
27. *Brahmāṇḍa purāṇa,* 1.33.47-48.
28. *Tantravārtika,* 1.3.11 *Vedādṛtepi kurvanti kalpaiḥ karmāṇi yājñikāḥ.*
    *Na tu kalpairvinā kecinmantrabrāhmaṇamātrakān*
29. Sāyaṇa, *Ṛgvedabhāsyopakramaṇikā,* p. 50;
    *nanu'āśvalāyanakimantrakāṇḍamanusṛtyapravṛttaḥ, kinvābrāhmaṇamanusṛtya*

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30. *Ibid.*
31. Dayanand, *op. cit., Vedasanjñāvicāraviṣaya*
32. *Ibid.*
33. *Ibid., Paṭhana- Pāṭhana Viṣaya.*
34. *Manusmriti*, 12.97;
*Bhūtaṁ bhavyaṁ bhavisyaṁ ca sarvaṁ vedātprasidhyati*
35. *Bṛhaddaivajñarañjana*, 1.28
36. Sāyaṇa, *Ṛgvedabhāsyopakramaṇikā*, p. 57.
37. Dayanand, *op. cit., Vedaviṣayavicāra*
38. *Ibid., Gaṇita-vidyā-viṣaya.*
39. *Ibid., Granthaprāmāṇyāprāmāṇyaviṣaya*
40. *Ibid.*
*Chandaḥ piṅgalācāryyakṛtasūtrabhāsyam.*
*Jyotiṣaṁ vasiṣṭhādyṛṣyuktaṁ rekhābījagaṇitamayaṁ ceti.*
41. *Ibid.,*
42. Dayanand Saraswati, *Yajūrvedabhāsyam*, 30.18, Part 3, ed. Prof. Gyan Prakash Shastri, 2008, Gurukula Kangri Vishwavidyalaya, Haridwar, p. 1613;
*Ye jyotirvidādisatyācaraṇān satkurvanti, duṣṭācārān goghnādīn tāḍayanti, te rājyaṁ karttuṁ śaknuvanti.*
43. *Ibid.*, 30.10.
44. Dayanand Saraswati, 2012 Vikrami, *Sanskāravidhi, nāmakaraṇaprakaraṇa*, Sarvadeshik Prakashan Ltd., New Delhi, p. 63.
45. *Ibid.*, Tithidevatā, 1. Brahman, 2. Tvaṣṭṛ, 3. Viṣṇu. 4. Yama, 5. Soma, 6. Kumāra, 7. Muni, 8. Vasu, 9. Śiva, 10. Dharma, 11. Rudra, 12. Vāyu, 13. Kāma, 14. Ananta, 15. Viśvedeva and 30. Pitara
46. *Ibid.*, p. 63.
47. Uḍayanācārya, 2008, *Sikṣāśāstram*, Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Sonipat, p. 14.
48. *Ibid.*
49. *Ṛgveda*, 1.164.145.
50. *Ibid.*, 10.71.2.
51. *Gopatha Brāhmaṇa*, 1.24.
52. Original unavailable,
*yadyapi bahu nādhīṣe tathāpi putra! Paṭha vyākaraṇam. Svajanaḥ śvajano mā bhūt sakalaṁ śakalaṁ sakṛcchakṛt*
53. Patañjali, *Mahābhāsya, paspaśāhnika-brāhmaṇena niṣkāraṇo dharmaḥ ṣaḍaṅgo vedodhyeyo jñeya iti. Pradhānaṁ ca ṣaṭsu aṅgeṣu vyākaraṇam. Pradhāne ca kṛto yatnaḥ phalavānbhavati*
54. Dayanand, *Ṛgavedabhāsya*, 1.36.12 "*Yato nāvaḥ (Aṣṭādhyāyī* 6.1.210)
*Ityādyudāttatvam yacca chāndasamādyudāttatvamityaśud'dhamuktam.*
*Auṇādikasya yatpratyayasya vidyamānatvāt*
55. Dayanand, *Ṛgvedādibhāsyabhūmikā, Paṭhana- Pāṭhana Viṣaya.*
56. Skandaswami, 1.112.20*, 1.116.3, 1.119.4, 6. 62.6; (Udgītha) 10.40.7, 10.56.12; (Venkaṭa) 1.112.20, 1.119.4, 4.27.4, 8.22.2,8.46.20, 10.40.7, 10.56.12, 10.143.5; (Sāyaṇa) 1.112.6, 1.112.20, 1.116.3, 1.116.4, 1.116.5, 1.117.14,1.119.4, 4.27.4, 6.62.6, 7.68.7, 7.69.7, 8.22.2, 8.46.20, 10.40.7, 10.65.12, 10.143.5; (Mudgala) 1.112.6, 1.112.20, 1.116.3, 1.116.4, 1.116.5, 1.117.14, 1.119.41.
57. Dayanand, 1.112.6, 1.112.20, 1.116.3, 1.116.4, 1.116.5, 1.117.14, 1.119.4, 4.27.4, 6.62.6.
58. Skandaswami, 1.116.3; (Sāyaṇa)1.116.3; (Mudgala) 1.116.3.
59. Dayanand, 1.116.3, 1.116.3; *Ṛgvedabhāsya, Naukāviṣaya*
60. Skandaswami, 1.116.7; (Venkaṭa) 1.116.7; (Sāyaṇa.) 1.116.7; (Mudgala) 1.116.7.
61. Dayanand, 1.116.7.

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62. Skandaswami, 1.116.7; (Venkaṭa) 1.116.7, 9.74.8; (Sāyaṇa.) 1.51.13, 1.116.7, 9.74.8.
63. Mudgala, 1.51.13, 1.116.71.
64. *Ṛgveda*,1.51.13.
65. Dayanand, 1.51.13, 1.116.7.
66. Skandaswami, 1.116.10; Venkaṭa 1.116.10, 5.74.5; Sāyaṇa 1.116.10, 5.74.5; Mudgala 1.116.10, 5.74.5.
67. Dayanand, 1.116.10, 5.74.5.
68. Skandaswami, 1.112.10, 1.117.1, 1.118.8, 1.116.15; (Venkaṭa) 1.112.10, 1.117.11, 10.39.8; (Sāyaṇa) 1.117.11, 10.39.8, 1.118.8; (Mudgala)1.112.10, 1.117.11, 1.118.8.
69. Dayanand, 1.112.10, 1.117.11,1.118.8, 1.116.15.
70. Venkaṭa, 1.182.1; (Sāyaṇa) 1.182.1.
71. Dayanand, 1.182.1.
72. (Durga) 1.117.8; (Nirukta) 6.6; (Skandaswami) 1.117.8, 5.61.9; (Skandmaheśvara) 1.117.8; (Nirukta) 6.6; (Venkaṭa) 1.117.8, 5.61.9; (Sāyaṇa) 1.117.8, 5.61.9; (Mudgala) 1.117.8, 5.61.9.
73. Dayanand, 1.117.8, 5.61.9.
74. Skandaswami, 1.51.3, 1.112.7, 1.112.16, 1.118.7, 1.119.6; (Udgītha) 10.39.9. (Venkaṭa)1.51.3, 1.112.7, 1.180.4, 7.68.5, 8.73.3, 8.73.8, 10.143.3; (Sāyaṇa) 1.51.3, 1.112.7, 1.112.16, 1.119.6, 1.180.4, 7.68.5, 8.73.3, 8.73.7, 10.39.9, 10.143.3; (Mudgala) 1.51.3, 1.112.7, 1.112.16, 1.119.6.
75. Dayanand, 1.51.3, 1.112.16, 1.118.7, 1.119.6, 1.180.4.
76. Nirūkta, 317; *Atrirna trayaḥ.*
77. Sāyaṇa, 1.139.9, 3.17, 1.183.5, 5.7.10, 5.73.6, 5.73.7, 5.74.1, 5.78.4, 8.42.5; (Mudgala) 5.40.6, 05.40.8, 5.73.6, 5.73.7, 5.74.1, 5.78.4.
78. Dayanand, 1.139.9, 1.183.5, 5.7.10, 5.40.6, 5.40.8, 5.73.6, 5.73.7, 5.74.1, 5.78.4.
79. Skandaswami, 6. 61., 1.116.18, 1.119.4, 6.31.4; (Venkaṭa) 4.26.3, 6.61.1, 1.116.18, 1.119.4, 2.19.6, 6.16.5, 9.61.2; (Sāyaṇa) 1.112.14, 4.26.3, 6.26.5, 6.61.1, 7.18.25, 1.116.18, 1.119.4, 1.130.7, 2.19.6, 4.30.20, 6.43.1, 9.61.2; (Mudgala) 1.112.14, 1.116.18, 1.119.4.
80. Dayanand, 1.112.14, 4.26.3, 6.26.5, 6.61.1, 7.18.25, 1.116.18, 1.119.4, 1.130.7, 2.19.6, 4.30.20, 6.16.5, 6.31.4, 6.43.1.
81. Skandaswami, 1.84.13, 1.119.9, 1.117.22; (Udgītha) 10.48.2; (Venkaṭa) 1.84.13, 1.119.9, 10.48.2; (Sāyaṇa) 1.84.13, 1.119.9,1.117.22, 10.48.2; (Mudgala) 1.84.13, 1.119.9, 1.117.22
82. Dayanand, 1.84.13, 1.119.9, 1.117.22.
83. Nighaṇṭu, 3.15.5.
84. Patañjali, *Mahābhāsya prathama āhnika; Rakṣārthaṁ vedānāmadhyeyaṁ vyākaraṇam.*
85. Nirukta, 2.1.
86. Durga, *Niruktavṛtti,* (V.K. Rajvade, Anand Ashram Sanskrit Granthawali, Pune, p. 122), *Arthasāmān'yaṁ balīyaḥ śabdasāmān'yāt*
87. *Nirukta,* 1.1.
88. Durga, *Niruktavṛtti,* p. 121.
89. Rajavade, Yāska's, *Nirukta,* p. 296.
90. *Nirukta,* 7.14.
91. *Ibid.*, 1.1.
92. *Yajurveda,* 23.48.
*Brahma sūryasamaṁ jyotirdyauḥ samudrasamaṁ saraḥ, Indraḥ pṛthivyai varṣīyān gostu mātrā na vidyate.*
93. *Ṛgveda,* 1.164.39; *Ṛco'akṣareparamevyoman'yasmindevā'adhiviśveniṣeduḥ,*
*Yastannavedakimṛcākarisyatiya'ittadvidusta'ime samāsate.*
94. *Nirukta,* 13.13; *Athāgamaḥ yāṁ yāṁ devatāṁ nirāha tasyāstasyāstādbhāvyamanubhavatyanubhavati*
95. *Ibid.*, 1.15; *Athāpīdamantareṇa mantreṣvarthapratyayo na vidyate,*
*Arthamapratiyato nātyantaṁ svarasanskāroddeśastadidaṁ vidyāsthānaṁ vyākaraṇasya kārtsn'yaṁ svārthasādhakaṁ ca*

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96. *Ibid.*, 2.1.
97. Dayanand, *Ṛgvedādibhāṣyabhūmikā, Granthaprāmāṇyāprāmāṇyaviṣaya*
98. *Ibid., Vedaviṣayavicāra*
99. Here Rāvaṇa is not the king of Lanka, but a scholar of South India (Bhagavaddatta, *Vedic Vāṅgmaya kā Itīhāsa*, Part-II)
100. *Ibid., Bhāṣyakaraṇaśaṅkāsamādhānādiviṣaya*

* The mantras quoted against the names of various commentators in references 56-77 and 79-84 are all from Ṛgveda.

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# CHAPTER 27

# The Role of *Svaras* in Understanding the Vedic Terms

*Mahavir Agrawal*

The purpose of the *Vedāṅga śāstra* is to help arrive at the true meaning of the Vedas. It is evident even from the etymology of the word *Vedāṅga,* which could be translated as the limbs or parts of Vedas. With their help, the Vedas can be understood with accuracy, clarity and ease. Acharya Yāska,[1] the author of Nirukta writes that the seers (rishis) were able to understand *dharma* without any help. Vedic literature was a part of their being, and they imparted the knowledge of the mantras through their preachings to those who were not proficient in *dharma.* Over time, due to a variety of reasons, it became increasingly difficult to pass on the knowledge of the mantras only through preachings. Scriptural evidence proves that the seers composed *Vedāṅga śāstra* to overcome the problem and to facilitate the understanding of the Vedas. This specialty of the *Vedāṅgas* has been pointed out in *Pāṇinīya śikṣā* also.[2]

The six *Vedāṅgas* i.e., *Chanada śāstra, Kalpa śāstra, Jyotiṣa śāstra, Nirukta śāstra, Śikṣā śāstra* and *Vyākaraṇa śāstra* hvae been regarded as the feet, the hands, the eyes, the ears, the nose and the mouth of the Vedas, respectively.[3] Patañjali has declared in his *Mahābhāshya* that *Vyākaraṇa Vedāṅga* is the most important of the six *Vedāṅgas.*[4] It is the key to all the other śāstras. *Svaraśāstra* is a part of Vyākaraṇa-śāstra and its main subject is correct pronunciation. *Svaraśāstra* is extremely helpful in the subtle discrimination in the meaning of the words.

## IMPORTANCE OF THE SVARAS AND SVARAŚĀSTRA

Underlining the importance of *Svaraśāstra,* a commentator of the Ṛgveda, Venkaṭamādhava has written in *Svarānukramaṇī* that just as a wayfarer is saved from stumbling in the dark by the light of a lamp, in the same way, by understanding the

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meaning of the words clearly,[5] the interpreter of the Vedas is saved from deviation from the right path.

Maharshi Patañjali has said in Mahābhāshya that the main purpose of Vyākaraṇa śāstra is to be free of doubts.[6] Swami Dayanand Saraswati has written in his *Ṛgvedadibhāshyabhūmikā* that the special benefit of the Svaraśāstra is in understanding the Vedas.[7] In *Sāhityadarpana*, Vishvanath has also accepted the utility of *Svaraśāstra* in this regard.[8] In the commentary of Mīmānsā philosophy Śabaraswāmī has written that the purpose of composition of the accents like *udātta* is to facilitate the meaning.[9] Bhartṛhari the author of Vakyāpadīya has mentioned that to arrive at the definite meaning of a word, the knowledge of the accent like *udātta* etc. is indispensable.[10] In the introduction of *Dvādaśavidhānukramaṇī* Venkaṭamādhava too has written that the division of noun and verb is done on the basis of accent only. It is to be noted that Panini, Kātyāyana and Patañjali consider *Svaraśāstra* as indispensable, as is clear from the study of Aṣṭādhyāyī, Vārtika and Mahābhāshya.

It is only with the help of *Svaraśāstra* that it becomes possible to arrive at a single suitable meaning of the words having multiple meanings. Let us elaborate on this fact with a few examples.

The word *kartā* has been used in Sanskrit literature in three different ways – *kartā* along with *tṛc* (तृच्) suffix, *kartā* having *tṛn* (तृन्) suffix and *kartā* which has *lut* (लुट्) lakāra. It is possible only through *Svaraśāstra*, to know which meaning of the word *kartā* is suitable at a particular place. The word *kartā* ending with *tṛc* (तृच्) suffix has its end (last syllable) marked as *udātta* (raised) by Pāṇinīya sūtra (*citaḥ*, चितः).[11] The word *kartā* ending with *tṛn* (तृन्) suffix has its beginning marked as *udātta* by (*ñnityādirnityam*, ञ्नित्यादिर्नित्यम्)[12] and the word *kartā* used in *lut lakāra* has its end marked as *anudātta*.[13] Just by looking at the word *kartā* with its accent marked, one can instantly grasp its specific meaning. This is possible only through *Svaraśāstra*.

Let us consider another example. People engaged in sacrificial rites ask for a *sthūla pṛṣatī* cow. Here, there is a doubt regarding the word *sthūla pṛṣatī* because in the word *sthūla pṛṣatī* there are two compounds. If this word is considered as *Tatpuruṣa* compound i.e., *sthūla cāsau pṛṣatī ca* the word will have its last syllable marked as *udātta* by the sūtra *samāsasya* (समासस्य ).[14] In *Tatpuruṣa* compound, its meaning will be that the cow should be fat and spotted. If the word *sthūla pṛṣatī*, is treated as *Bahubrīhi* compound, then the word will have *pūrvapadaprakṛti-svara* (पूर्वपदप्रकृति–स्वर). In *Bahuvrīhi* compound it will mean the cow which has big spots on her. Here, there is a difference in the meaning due to the difference in compound. The purpose for which the person performing sacrifice utters the word *sthūla pṛṣatī* could be known through *Svaraśāstra* only.[15] That is why, Maharshi Patañjali has clearly said in his Mahābhāshya that removal of doubts regarding the meaning of the word is impossible without the help of accent.[16]

Describing the subsidiary purposes of grammar, Maharshi Patañjali has said in Mahābhāshya that a word whose accent has not been marked correctly, does not convey its real meaning.[17] It becomes a thunder-bolt to the tongue and destroys the person performing a sacrifice, just as the demons got destroyed due to pronouncing the word

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*Indraśatru* incorrectly, ignoring the rules of accent. In the word *Indraśatru* also there are two compounds – *Tatpuruṣa* and *Bahuvrīhi.* In *Tatpuruṣa* compound, the word *Indraśatru* has its last syllable marked as *antodātta,* and is *uttarapadārtha.* Its latter part is prominent. Whereas in *Bahuvrīhi* the compound *Indraśatru* has *pūrva-pada prakṛti svara* - its accent is shifted from the final member of the compound to the first member, ending in substantives, which have been transformed into adjectives agreeing in gender, number and case with another substantive expressed or understood (*aṅgapadapradhāna*). The demons spoiled everything by putting the accent at the wrong place and met with destruction.

It is not surprising therefore, that all the ancient and the modern Acharyas (scholars) have accepted the importance of the Vedic-accents.

## IMPORTANCE OF SVARAŚĀSTRA FOR UNDERSTANDING THE VEDA MANTRAS

As we have seen, all Acharyas agree unanimously that for arriving at the correct meaning of the Vedas, the knowledge of *Svaraśāstra* is imperative. Here are some more examples:

The Vedas, while rejecting the practice of idol worship, caution that God cannot be represented through a statue. This matter of great importance is stated as - *Na tasya pratimā asti* (न तस्य प्रतिमा अस्ति।)[18] A number of scholars have expressed doubt whether in this part of the mantra, there are two different words *Na tasya,* or one word, *Natasya.* Swami Dayanand Saraswati has accepted these as two different words and has clarified this fact with the help of *svara.* According to *Svaraśāstra* there is only one *udātta* in one word, but in this part of the mantra two *udāttas* have been shown, which makes it clear that *Na tasya* are two different words. If accent is not marked then it may not express the correct meaning.

In another mantra of Yajurveda[19] we come across – *Bhrātṛvyasya Vadhāya* (भ्रातृव्यस्य वधाय). There are two meanings of the word *Bhrātṛvya.* It is used either for brother's son or for enemy. A doubt is inevitable, as to what should be the meaning of the word *Bhrātṛvya* in the mantra mentioned above? Here, it is only *Svaraśāstra* which can lead us to the correct meaning, because the word *Bhrātṛvya* which ends in *vyat* (व्यत्) suffix[20] has its end marked as *svarita.*[21] The word *Bhrātṛvya* which ends in *vyan* (व्यन्) suffix[22] has its beginning marked as *udātta.*[23] In the former case, it means brother's son, while in the latter, it means, the enemy. Without *svara* it is very difficult to know the real meaning of the word *Bhrātṛvya* which can lead to the misinterpretation of a mantra.

In the mantra ...*asminlloke'asmin kṣaye* (...अस्मिँल्लोकेऽस्मिन् क्षये)[24] of Yajurveda, we find the word क्षय. This word is used in the sense of a disease, total devastation and residence. *Svaraśāstra* helps us decipher the sense in which the word been used in this mantra. The word *Kṣaya* when used in the sense of residence has its first syllable marked as *udātta.*[25] In other meanings, it has its end marked as *udātta.* Here, it is *adyudātta.* Therefore, it is certain that its meaning is residence.

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In the mantra *Yathemāṁ vācaṁ kalyāṇīm* (यथेमां वाचं कल्याणीम्)[26] of the Yajurveda the word *arya* (अर्य) has been used. The word iswell known for the meanings – Swami and *Vaiśya.*[27] Kātyāyana's says that the word *arya* has its last syllable accented as *antodātta* when it means Swami.[28] Acharya Śāntanva has also described it in the same way in his *Phiṭ sūtra* (फिट् सूत्र).[29] In the above mantra the first syllable of the word *arya* has been accented as *adyudātta* which makes it clear that in this mantra the word *arya* means *Vaiśya.*

In the Yajurveda, the sentence *Mā mā hinsīḥ* (मा मा हिंसीः)[30] occurs at a number of places. Here, the word *mā* has been used twice. One *mā* has been used as a *nipāta* (a word which conveys different meanings), conveying prohibition as its meaning. The other *mā* word is used here in place of *asmad.* Which of the two is used to express prohibition, and which one is used as a substitute of *asmad* can be known only through Svaraśāstra. *Mā* used as *nipāta*[31] conveying prohibition as its meaning has its first syllable marked as *ādyudātta.*[32] The word *mā* used in place of *asmad*[33] is *anudātta.* Numerous such examples can be given, which prove the importance of *Svaraśāstra* in arriving at the true meaning of the Veda mantras, making it an essential subject of study.

## SVARAŚĀSTRA IN THE CONTEXT OF LAUKIKA USAGE AND MUSIC

*Svaraśāstra* is indispensible not only in Vedic usages but also in *laukika* (worldly) usages in daily life.[34] This has been suggested by the great grammarian Panini himself, as is evident from his sūtra *udakca vipāśaḥ* (उदक्च विपाशः).[35] The fact has been clarified by Jayāditya[36] while explaining this sūtra.

### *Swami Dayanand's View regarding the Accents*

Swami Dayanand Saraswati considers the *Svaraśāstra* not only useful, but essential. From a study of Swami Dayanand's works like *Sauvara, Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā,*[37] the commentary on *Aṣṭādhyāyī,* it is evident that he acknowledges in no uncertain terms, the greatness of the *Svaraśāstra.* He has written in the introduction of his work *Sauvara* (सौवर)[38] that one can quickly grasp the definite meaning of *laukika* or the worldly as well the Vedic words with the help of Svaraśāstra. In *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā* Swamiji has written about the arrangement of *svaras* while explaining their importance.

Swamiji, while quoting from Yājñavalkya's śikṣā in the introduction of *sauvara,* also points out that the *svaras* like *udātta* etc., have a relation with *Ṣadja* etc. *svaras* (tones) of music too.[39]

### *Vedic-svaras and the Svaras of Music*

In the Vedic accents, there are three main accents i.e., *udātta* (high) *anudātta* (low) and *Svarita* (sounded). In Samgitā-śāstra, mainly seven *svaras* i.e. *Ṣadja, Ṛṣabha, Gāndhāra, Madhyama, Pañcama, Dhaivata* and *Niṣāda,* have been enumerated.[40] It is clearly established from sikṣā, one of the *Vedāṅgas* ´which teaches proper articulation and pronunciation of Vedic texts, that the Vedic *svaras* and the *svaras* of music are inter-

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related. Yājñavalkya śikṣā states that the *svaras* like *Ṣadja* etc. listed in Gāndhārva Veda, are the same as *udātta* and *anudātta* etc. *svaras* of the Vedas.[41]

It is also stated in Pāṇinīya śikṣā, Nāradīya śikṣā and Yājñavalkya śikṣā that *Niṣāda* and *Gāndhārva* have originated from *udātta; Ṛṣabha* and *Dhaivata* from *Anudātta; Ṣadja, Madhyama* and *Pañcama* from *svarita.*[42] Nāradīya śikṣā explaines that *Ṣadja* emerges from the *kaṇṭha, Ṛṣabha* emerges from the head, *Gāndhāra* from the nose, *madhyama* from the chest *Pañcama* from the chest, the head and the throat, *Dhaivata* from the fore-head and *Niṣāda* originates from all these organs combined.[43]

The importance of *Svaraśāstra* for understanding the minute meaning of the Vedic as well *laukika* words, cannot be over emphasised. However, its study needs to be supported and promoted, or else this important *śāstra* is moving towards extinction.

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33. *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, 8.1.23
34. *Ibid*, 1.2.33, 8.2.83, 1.2.84
35. *Ibid.*, 4.2.73
36. *Kāśikā*, 4.2.74, Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Haryana
37. *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā*, p. 385
38. *Sauvara*, Introduction, Vedic Yantralaya, Ajmer, p. 1
39. *Ibid.*, p. 2
40. *Nāradīya śikṣā*, 122.4, Chaukhambha Prakashan, Delhi.
41. *Śikṣa Saṅgrah*, Chaukhambha Prakashan, Delhi, p. 1
42. *Ibid.*, p. 2, 379, 424
43. *Ibid.*, p. 408

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# CHAPTER 28

# Dispelling Misconceptions about the Atharvaveda

*Dinesh Chandra Shastri*

There has been much controversy about the originality, antiquity, authority, status and theme of the Atharvaveda. Many scholars, including most of the western ones, are of the view that its advent is quite modern as compared to the other three Vedas – Ṛgveda, Yajurveda and Sāmaveda. Some believe that it does not even qualify to be called a Veda as its sizeable parts are lateral additions. A number of scholars also claim that it contains several mantras that smack of sorcery and magic.[1] Like many other myths about the Vedas, these controversies too, are the result of the intriguing handiwork of the Indian Brāhmiṇical pandits of the post-Vedic period. Not surprisingly, such perceptions appealed to most western scholars, who obviously did not have the requisite cultural moorings, knowledge and proficiency to understand the deep and multiple nuances of the Vedic statements and vocabulary.

## ANTIQUITY OF ATHARVAVEDA

A detailed and intimate study of Vedic literature reveals that all such doubts about the Atharvaveda are misplaced. The Vedas themselves offer intrinsic evidence on this issue.[2] All scriptures – the Brāhmaṇa granthas,[3] the Āraṇyakas, the Upaniṣads and many others also called the Bāhya-pramāṇas – are also replete with abundant evidence, testifying the contemporaneous antiquity, originality and authority of the Atharvaveda at par with the other three Vedas. The first and foremost of these is the mention of Atharvaveda, along with the Yajurveda and the Sāmaveda, in the Ṛgveda itself. A pertinent question here arises as to how can the Atharvaveda be deemed to belong to a later period while its name occurs in several mantras of Ṛgveda[4] and Yajurveda[5] etc.

Part of the confusion seems to have risen from the use of the word *trayīvidyā* (trilogy) that has led some scholars to deduce that the Vedas are only three.[6] The word *trayīvidyā* refers to the three forms of language – prose (*gadya*), poetry (*padya*) and

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music (*sangeet* or *geetimaya*) used in the Vedas. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, which contains the names of all the four Vedas,[7] makes it explicit that the Vedas use these three forms of expression, they are therefore called the *trayīvidyā*.[8] Actually, the very word *trayīvidyā* used to describe the Vedas is a post-Vedic coinage. Being oblivious of the real significance thereof, the scholars of the post-Vedic period erroneously separated the Atharvaveda merely on the basis of this nomenclature; and as stated earlier the foreign scholars concurred.

Atharvaveda addresses a wide range of subjects and uses a variety of poetic meters known as Chandas. Hence, it is also fondly called by various names such as the *Brahmveda, Kṣātraveda, Chandānsi, Chandoha* and *Chandoveda*[9] etc. Even the number 'four' is denoted by the word *Veda* in metrology – the science of poetic or musical composition and measurement. Nirukta, which is acknowledged as the most rational and authentic guide for correct interpretation of the Vedic terminology, offers an interpretation of the Ṛgveda mantras (10.71.11 and 4.58.3) declaring that Atharvaveda is indeed included in the four Vedas, which are together called the *Vedacatuṣṭaya*.[10]

The very meaning of the word 'Atharva' is a person who is fully mellowed and perfectly stable, and also well versed in the knowledge of the Veda i.e., the spiritual science of attaining equanimity and stability.[11] Such an Atharva personality is mentioned in several Ṛgveda mantras.[12] Many other Vedic scriptures like the Muṇḍakopaniṣad, Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad, Chāndogyopaniṣad, Aitareya Brāhmaṇa and Taitirīya Brāhmaṇa also mention the name of Atharvaveda along with the other three.[13] Aitareya Brāhmaṇa goes to the extent of calling a person possessing special knowledge of the Atharvaveda as the Brahmā,[14] the most religious and pious of all men. According to Swami Dayanand Saraswati, the founder of Arya Sāmaj, the four Vedas are perfectly complementary of each other as they deal with four subjects, while retaining the main singular theme – spirituality. Ṛgveda is knowledge dominant (*Jñāna Pradhāna*), Yajurveda has details of sacrifices and works (*Yajñas*), Sāmaveda offers meditational and prayer practices (*Upāsanā* and *Prārthanā*), and the Atharvaveda focuses on the physical sciences (*Vijñāna*). Therefore, the four Vedas are also called *Jñāna Kāṇḍa, Karma Kāṇḍa, Bhakti* or *Upāsanā Kāṇḍa*, and *Vijñāna Kāṇḍa* respectively.[15] This thematic division is accepted by the scholars, almost unanimously.

Thus we find hundreds of references in a host of Vedic scriptures and writings, which conclusively prove the antiquity, authority and status of the Atharvaveda, totally at par with the other three Vedas. It is an integral, essential and complementary component of the quadrant – 'the *Vedacatuṣṭaya*'.

## MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE ATHARVAVEDA

Another myth propagated about the Atharvaveda is that it contains magic and sorcery. Such a view has been put forth in treatises like 'A History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature' by Macdonell. Renowned modern Indian scholars like S. Radhakrishnan, Dasgupta and Baldev Upadhyaya too were influenced by this opinion.[16] However, the real initiator of this perception happens to be Kaushik, who for the first time made several such experiments (*viniyoga*) in his Kaushik Sūtra that were instrumental in misconstruing the

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image of Atharvaveda. Acharya Sāyaṇa's Bhāshya of the Atharvaveda too has by and large relied upon these Kaushikian misuses and misinterpretations.[17] Had Sāyaṇa, instead of choosing to be a mere propagator of the ideas of Kaushik, taken the trouble of attempting his own interpretation, the myth of Atharvaveda being a book of magic and sorcery would perhaps have not spread as far and wide as it has. Realising this, Sri Aurobindo recorded in his book 'Veda Rahasya', that he considered it his good fortune that he had not read Sāyaṇa's interpretation first, or he too would have possibly been carried away by it, and would have missed out on the spiritual element that he has found in the Vedas.[18]

Before we proceed to allay the misunderstandings, misinterpretations and misuses, a clarification on the real meaning of the word '*viniyoga*' is in order. This word is a combination of two prefixes (*upasarga*) '*vi*' + *ni* and the main noun '*yoga*'. '*Vi*' denotes 'specifically' and '*ni*' signifies 'definitely', while '*yoga*' means 'to join', 'to yoke', 'to come together', 'to assemble', 'to unite', 'to attach', 'to be one with' 'to associate' etc. The specific use of any mantra in a human action including a ritual (*karmakāṇḍa*) to express one's intention and resolve (*sankalpa*), to proceed on a certain path for achieving a certain objective is known as '*viniyoga*'. Swami Dayanand is of the firm opinion that the meaning of the mantra is wholly independent of '*viniyoga*', and therefore has a generic (*yaugic*) meaning (*padārtha*) and a contextual implication (*sandarbhārtha*). This clearly implies that the meaning of the mantra has to be independent and a precursor of the '*viniyoga*' – the objective. The '*viniyoga*' and not the mantra has to be the subservient. Commissioning the mantra to subservience is only a misuse, distortion and abjectness of the highest order, which amounts to doing gross injustice to the mantra and is against the tenets of spiritual piety and practice. Such a misadventure is nothing short of corruption and misappropriation (*bhraṣṭācāra* and *anācāra*) that is highly demeaning and must therefore be strictly desisted from. The right course is to associate with and act according to the intent, import and spirit of the mantra to attain spiritual enlightenment and ultimate reality, rather than using it for fulfilling the mundane objectives. The tantric use of mantras for pervert cravings by misleading the layman is the invention of the pandits of the later period for their own ulterior objectives. These deployments do not stand the scrutiny of either logic or science and are hence nothing but false imagination and pretentions, which are also incapable of realising even the worldly desires. People who indulge in these malpractices indulge in conceit, thus committing a sin of the highest type instead of doing any good to others or themselves. This is aptly described by the Yajurveda mantra "*Asuryyā nāma te lokā andhena tamasāvṛtāḥ.*"[19]

## MISINTERPRETATIONS OF MANTRAS

The misinterpretation and misuse of mantras for vested interests, has done unpardonable injustice to the Vedas and irreparable harm to society at large for more than two millennia. Unfortunately, many of these bizarre malpractices still continue to haunt our nation to keep it mired in deep superstition, ignorance, inaction and penury. Let us analyse a few mantras from the Atharvaveda that are purported to have been

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misinterpreted, and see how the mantras in reality, imply something entirely different than what has been interpreted.

Atharvaveda sūkta 2.1.1–5 called '*Paramam Dhāmam sūkta*' sings the praise of Brahma the Almighty, the Creator. It says that only an intelligent and enlightened person can attain that Reality, the ultimate Truth; and only a person who possesses knowledge of the Veda (*Vedajñāna*) and has full command over language and speech (*vāṇī*) can discourse that knowledge. Kaushik has proposed using this mantra for predicting if one can obtain or not obtain the desired result of one's action. Similarly, he tries to use it for finding a lost thing and prejudging the fate of a virgin before marriage.[20] It is obvious that the theme of the mantra is not even remotely related to his suggestion. Unfortunately, Sāyaṇa too has followed Kaushik in mentioning these in the beginning of his commentary – the Bhāshya of this sūkta, but at least not while giving out the meaning thereof.

Atharvaveda sūkta 2.15.1–6 is another example. It is known as the *Abhayaprāptiḥ sūkta* i.e., the hymn for attaining fearlessness. Herein one addresses one's own life energy (*prāṇa*) and prays that may it get so fortified as to give strength enough, to not fear anything just as the sky (*dyau*), the earth (*pṛthvi*), the sun (*sūrya*), the moon (*chandra*), the Creator (Brahma) and the Truth (*satya*) are not afraid of anything. What a beautiful address to the self it is! It encourages one to muster one's own inner strength, whenever one finds oneself in trouble, by imbibing the spirit of this mantra – the counselling of the self to overcome the difficulty. But Kaushik proposes something that is not even remotely prescribed by the mantra. He says that if one desires a long life, one should cook rice and sprinkle it with water, treat it with the recitation of this mantra and then eat it.[21] What a simple formula for longevity – if only it were to be true! The *Ātmavidyā sūkta* 4.2.1–8 praises the Almighty as the provider of psychological and physical powers, the graceful enlightener, ruler of the inanimate and animate, bearer of the earth and other celestial bodies, creator of the universe, and therefore the Only One worth worshipping. Kaushik, however, uses the mantra to slaughter a virgin cow and offer its limbs in the sacrificial fire to attain peace[22] – a horrible distortion of the pious intent of the mantra!

The *Ajaram Kṣatram sūkta* 3.19.1–8 offers an inspiring resolve for gaining strength, acquiring the means and practices needed for inculcating the fighting spirit to win against adversaries and adversities. Kaushik suggests that to score a victory in a battle with the enemy, *ghee* (clarified butter) be offered in fire while chanting the mantra before a white legged goat or sheep, and release the animal towards the enemy.[23] What a great, simple and cost-effective technique of warfare, sure of winning the war and rendering all military armaments, including the nuclear ones, useless!

The *Sānmanasyam sūkta* 3.30.1–7, true to its name, contains a prayer-cum-resolve on part of all the family members to remain united, think and work together, treat each other with due love and respect, for complete unison and harmony in the family. Kaushik's prescription for the same is to place two pots, one filled with water and another with wine, in the centre of the village, recite the mantra, and then take these through the habitat, offering the drinks to everyone along with the pieces of beef of a

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three year old cow.[24] Can there be a more ridiculous and horrendous recipe to achieve familial and national unity?

The *Paśu Samvardhanam sūkta* 2.26.1–5 underlines the importance of rearing dairy animals for producing nutritive milk and milk products for one's family. Kaushik however, suggests that one should mix the saliva of the calf with milk, recite the mantra, consume the concoction, donate the cow, and place a water pitcher treated with the mantra in the centre of the cow shed.[25]

The *Vṛṣṭi sūkta* 4.15.1–16 contains a poetic prayer for rain and a wish to see clouds everywhere, ample rains, frogs croaking and lush vegetative growth all around. This is the usual wish of all, knowing the vital importance of the rains, after the dry hot summer. Kaushik invents a funny package of technology for the precipitation of rain. He advises us to perform a sacrifice propitiating the *Maruta* gods mentioned in the mantra, to chop off and throw away, the heads of a dog and a ram, in a well after reciting the mantra; and also to shave a human head, tie the hair along with a pair of old shoes on one end of a bamboo and to raise these skywards.[26] Only if, all droughts could be avoided with this wonderful technique!

*Yoṣitaḥ Dhamanyaśca sūkta* 1.17.1–4 simply cautions against and advises to take care of excessive bleeding during menstruation in women and any sort of bleeding due to other reasons including the presence of stones etc. in the body organs.[27] Kaushik claims that the mere recitation of this mantra is capable of stopping bleeding caused by an injury or over-bleeding during the menstrual course!

In the twin sūktas at 4.31 and 4.32, people address their army commander, the leader, known as *Manyu* to save them from the enemy, which is a universal practice in all nations and societies expressing confidence in and support to the army and the leadership. Spiritually, *Manyu* is the mind, whose strength is essential for overcoming the adverse untoward feelings and other obstructive factors that come in the way of enlightenment. Therefore, these are named as the *Manyu sūktas.* Kaushik says that the arduous task of overcoming the enemy too can be achieved by merely chanting the mantras![28]

Mantras of the *Brahmavidyā sūkta* 5.6.1–14 represent first the people's prayer to the Brahma, the Creator, then a call to the Soma and Rudra i.e., the strength and defence of the nation, and ultimately Indra, the ruler for protection from the enemy. Agni too is implored for warding off the adversarial attempt at vitiating the vision, thought and resolve of the people. In the political context *Soma, Rudra, Agni* and *Indra* represent the various faculties and positions of a system governing the nation – the collective will of the people being the Soma, the military power, the Rudra, the knowledge and awareness, Agni, the ruler, Indra etc.; while on the psychological/spiritual plane, these denote the Almighty (Brahma), the internal psychological strength (Soma), the physical prowess and health (Rudra), knowledge or *jñāna* (Agni), the will-power (Indra), which all are required to score a victory over the adversaries or adversities of any type. Kaushik uses the mantras to predict the result of war against disease and also to make predictions for expecting mothers before child-birth![29]

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The famous *Brahmagavī sūkta* 5.18.1–15 and 5.19.1–15 has literally been translated by Kaushik and others, to mean that the ruler (Raja), who eats the cow of a Brahman perishes himself and the nation ruled by him is also doomed. The question to be asked here is: why only a Brahman's cow? If the cow is a pious animal, killing any cow or animal should be deemed as a sin, which it is. Actually the correct meaning of the word '*gau*' here is the voice, the word, the advice, the '*vāṇī*'. The import of the mantra, therefore, is that a ruler, who eats up, ignores or stifles the voice of the learned, well meaning and sincere advisors or the intelligentsia, commits a sin, hence ruins himself, and the nation too stands to lose its strength. Kaushik has used this sūkta also for *Abhicāra Karma* i.e., entering the body of the adversary.[30]

Sūkta at 7.116.1–2 mentions fevers of several types – one that comes with shivering, the other that generates excessive heat and another one that occurs on alternate days. It expresses a wish to be kept away from and to be cured of these. Accordingly, the sūkta is named as '*Jvaranāśanam sūkta*'. Interestingly, the mantras also mention the frog (*māṇḍūka*). The obvious inference is that it refers to the seasonal fevers during the rains. But Kaushik again distorts the meaning irrationally to use the mantra as a cure for such fevers!

The book, Kaushik Sūtra, is full of such distortions of the Atharvaveda. It appears that Kaushik was a Tantrik and it was with a view to propagate his Tantrik practices that he went on inventing several such tricks, which he called *Viniyoga, Māraṇa, Uccāṭana, Vaśīkaraṇa, Kṛtyānirharaṇa, Abhicāra, Maṇibandhana* etc. As observed earlier, some later scholars like Sāyaṇa, followed him, either without serious reflection, or perhaps with an ulterior self motive or prejudice. Even more anomalous is the fact that Kaushik himself and the later Acharyas too have applied one and the same mantra for several objectives. On a close perusal, these applications turn out to have neither any relevance to nor the approval of the Veda. According to Swami Dayanand, only those uses and applications are valid as are testified by the essence and import of the respective mantra and canon of logic.

## MANTRA VIDYĀ

It must be acknowledged that many mantras of the Atharvaveda do contain lots of Ayurvedic, scientific and psychological formulations, some of which have been misunderstood or misconstrued as magical trickery and sorcery.[31] This scientific knowledge in the mantras has been classified under five heads:[32]
1. *Sankalpa* or *āveśa* 2. *Abhimarśa* or *Mārjana* (Mesmerism) 3. *ādeśa* (Hypnotism) 4. *Maṇibandhana* and 5. *Kṛtyā* and *Abhicāra.*

### *1. Sankalpa*

The mantras that speak of a vow or resolve to abjure evil, acquire elephantine strength and achieve success are examples of *Sankalpa* or *āveśa.*[33]

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***2. Abhimarśa***

The ones that are designed to cause sensation in the body through touch and counselling including self-counselling for curing physical, mental and psychological ailments like memory pain, sleep disorders and depression etc. fall under the category of *Abhimarśa* or *Mārjana.*[34] These are akin to the modern psycho-counselling and reiki etc. These are acknowledged even by modern medical sciences as effective therapies.

***3. Ādeśa***

For treating some physical, mental, and psychological syndromes '*ādeśa* or *Samvaśīkaraṇa*' – hypnotism etc., are methods considered quite effective for building confidence and will power. Some essences like sandal, camphor, basel (tulasi) seeds, guggulu etc., are known to be useful, if put in fire or administered as local applications and given for sniffing.[35] Use of similar therapies like smoke, aroma and psycho-suggestions is recognised in modern days too.

***4. Maṇibandhana***

Maṇibandhana prescriptions are detailed in some sūktas of Śaunaka Samhitā of Atharvaveda. These, therefore, are known as *Maṇi sūktas.*[36] These include:

i. *Abhīvartamaṇi* (1.29), ii. *Jaṅgiḍamaṇi* (2.4, 19.34, 19.35), iii. *Parṇamaṇi* (3.5), iv. *Aśvatthamaṇi* (3.6), v. *Śaṅkhamaṇi* (4.10), vi. *Pratisara maṇi* (8.5), vii. *Vaiyāghramaṇi* (8.7), viii. *Varaṇamaṇi* (10.3), ix. *Phālamaṇi* (10.6), x. *Darbhamaṇi* (19.28-30, 32-33), xi. *Audumbaramaṇi* (19.31), xii. *Śatavāramaṇi* (19.36), xiii. *Astṛtamaṇi* (19.46).

Sāyaṇa and some other commentators have simply taken these as objects meant to be physically tied to certain parts of the body to obtain the desired results and ward off the unwanted ones. This is because of a failure to understand the real meaning of the word '*Maṇi*', and the essence of mantras. Literally, *Maṇi* means a bead. Generically, the words like '*Maṇi*' and '*Ratna*' however, mean anything that is of special utility and value.[37] In common parlance too, praising a learned person and a poet etc., with titles such as Pandit Ratna and Kavi Ratna or Vidvad Śiromaṇi and Kavi Śiromaṇi is quite common. Atharvaveda sūktas 2.4 and 15.2 imply that meaning.[38] Some mantras also speak of Maṇibandhana,[39] but it is suggestive of acquiring perfect knowledge and control of the qualities of the particular vegetation or substance i.e., the chemical, physical and medicinal properties thereof, and their use. Some of these do have such active ingredients as are capable of treating some ailments by just keeping them tied to the body, which although is a subject-matter of research.

The *maṇis* listed above have been classified by some scholars under two categories: (i) Ayurvedic and (ii) Political.

***Ayurvedic maṇis***

Ayurvedic maṇis, described in the Atharvaveda, are of five types:

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(i) ***Jaṅgiḍamaṇi*** is a bead made of a tree-wood. According to Sāyaṇa this maṇi, crossed through with a thread of jute and energised by reciting the mantras in 2.4, 19.34 and 19.35, if tied to the body, can ward off and protect against any kind of violence,[40] which is ridiculous. Jaṅgiḍa is a medicinal plant and its properties are known to be akin to another medicinal plant known as '*Vacā*'[41] mentioned in the famous Ayurvedic treatise Rāj Nighaṇṭu. The eminent Vedic scholar Damodar Satavalekar too supports this view.

(ii) ***Śaṅkhamaṇi*** mentioned in sūkta 4.10 and Kaushik sūtra 7.6 and 7.9 and Nakṣatra Kalpa 17 and 19 is prescribed to make a child live long and save it from drowning in a flood, if tied to the child at the time of Upanayana Sanskāra i.e., the rite of giving the sacred thread.[42] The same Atharva sūkta (4.10) calls the *Śaṅkha* – the conch shell '*Viśvabheṣaja*' and '*Kṛśanaḥ*', which mean a medicine with multiple uses and the one that kills human enemies like worms etc. It also mentions '*Hiraṇyajāḥ Śaṅkhaḥ*' that refers to *gold+Śaṅkha bhasma* – the burnt ashes of the two substances. All these are commonly used by the Ayurveda to treat several diseases like general debility, mental weakness and disorders, and digestive and geriatric ailments.

(iii) ***Śatavāramaṇi*** (19.36) is a medicinal plant. Its root, *Śatavāra* that has hundreds of auxiliary roots, is of special medicinal value. It is also useful as an anti-oxidant and for enhancing potency. Kaushik and Sāyaṇa again suggest tying the *maṇi* thereof, for those whose progeny do not survive. Interestingly, Sāyaṇa himself acknowledges it as a medicine.

(iv) ***Vaiyāghramaṇi*** is to be made of the wood of any ten of the twenty trees – *guggulu* (Boswellia serrata, Roxb), *jāmuna, kabīlā, strak, baṅka, sirasa, varaṇa, bela, jaṅgiḍa, kuṭaka, gṛhya, galāgala, bet, śimbala, sipuna, tinaśa, araṇikā, aśmayokta, tunyu* and *pīta dāru.* As per Kaushik and Sāyaṇa, covering it with shellac wax and gold, reciting the mantra and tying it to the body can cure dreaded chronic diseases like tuberculosis (*yakṣmā*). All these trees are known as *śānta vṛkṣaḥ*, various parts of which are used in Ayurveda for making several concoctions and other forms of medicine to treat asthma, T.B., diabetes etc. Satavalekar translates *vaiyāghra* as the castor plant, especially the red castor,[43] the seeds and oil of which are commonly and effectively used to cure chronic constipation etc. The literal meaning of the word *vaiyāghra* is the tiger or the wolf that suggests that the medicines made from these plants attack the diseases like a tiger or wolf.[44]

(v) ***Aśvatthamaṇi,*** suggests Sāyaṇa, is mentioned in the sūkta 3.6. One finds that there is no such word in any mantra of this sūkta. He suggests that a bead of the '*peepul*' – ficus religiosa – growing on the branch of a '*khair*' – *kattha* tree energised with the mantra be thrown in a flowing waters of a river and also tied to the human body to kill an enemy or adversary. Damodar Satavalekar[45] and Vishvanath Vidyalankar[46] say that *Aśvattha* means a hero and a commander and the robust benevolent tree *Aśvattha* is used only as a symbol or a poetic simile.

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***Political Maṇis***

The so-called political '*maṇis*' are funny dispensations and devices proposed by Sāyaṇa etc. for political gains. They declare that the aims like personal and national strength and control over and annihilation of the enemies can be achieved by simply making beads from the wood of various trees, metals and other substances, dipping them in curd and honey etc. on particular moon days of the lunar month for a prescribed period of three days or so, energising these with the mantra-chants and tying them to the specified body limbs![47] According to them *Parṇamaṇi* made of *ḍhāka* or *palāśa*', '*Pratisaramaṇi*' of *tilaka* plant, *Abhīvarta* of gold, *Varanamaṇi* of *varana* tree, *phālamaṇi* of the *kattha* or *khadir*' tree, and '*Darbhamaṇi*' of '*darbha*' grass, could be used as arms and means to strengthen, protect and defend persons as well as nations.

Eminent scholars like Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Vishvanath Vidyalankar, Damodar Satavalekar and Acharya Priyavrata[48] etc. have invoked the numerous adjectives mentioned in these very sūktas extolling the qualities and qualifications of these maṇis to suggest that in the political context, these terms refer to certain posts, positions, appointments, certificates, medals, important valuable documents like treaties and titles etc. *Parṇa* literally means a paper, a document, and also a ballot. *Pratisara* connotes the counter or defence; *Abhīvarta* is surrounding or fortifying or laying siege; *Astṛta* is the invincible; *Varaṇa* is a selection or an election or an appointment; *Phāla* is the implement used for ploughing land for cultivation and *maṇi*, the valuable products thereof simply mean all agricultural produce; *Darbha* is naturally growing grass and also implies superiority or suzerainty. Some of these are also the names of trees and plants having medicinal and other uses. These include *Dhaka, Varaṇa, Tilaka, Darbha* etc. A detailed and concerted study is warranted to decode their rational meanings and relevance in various contexts.

Many Vedic terms, it must be understood, have multiple meanings. Take for example, words like *uttama ausadhīnām* (good medicines), *vyāgraḥ śvapadām iva* (the one who acts and moves like a wolf or a tiger), *śatruḥ* (killer of the enemy), *sapatnahā* (remover or vanquisher of the jealous), *sapatnaksyanaḥ* (destroyer of the jealous), *avārayanta* (elected or selected or granted), *vārayiśyate* and *avīvaran* (picked up or appointed), *jātau* (born), *sapatnadambhanam* (suppressing or arresting or confining the adversary), *dviṣastapanam hṛdaḥ*' (horrifying ill-will or one with ill-will), *śatrūnām tāpayan manaḥ* (disheartening or demoralising the enemy), *dharma iva*, (doing one's duty religiously), *durhārdānām* (suppressing the ill-intentioned, bad or criminal people and tendencies), *tanūpānam* (protector and saviour of life, property and dignity) – Unless the *yaugic* or *dhātvic* i.e., generic meanings and nuances, the best guide to which is offered by Yāskāchārya in his great treatise Nirukta, are properly comprehended, the various meanings and implications thereof cannot be appreciated. Once this is done, it turns out that the words have a meaningful relevance to physical, personal, social, political, psychological and spiritual life. These words then represent and help distinguish between the protective, supportive and positive virtuous features, elements and tendencies on the one hand and disturbing, impeding, deviating, diversionary, negative, adversary and evil ones on the other.

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The Vedas impart a knowledge and wisdom that impels and helps humanity to discern and distinguish between the two, consolidate the positives and do away with or purge the negatives to achieve excellence at all levels. The crux, however, is the human endeavour to improve oneself and ultimately attain the Truth, which is absolute positivity. There can be no short cuts or tricks as suggested by the Tantrics, which if adopted, only demean and degrade any entity, individual or society. The Veda mantras, including those of the Atharvaveda are a wonderful key to these discernments and as such are the means as well as the end in themselves. Making them subservient to mundane cravings is nothing but perversion and sin of the highest order.

### *5. Kṛtyā and Abhicāra*

The practices called *Kṛtyā* and *Abhicāra* too have been misconstrued and misused by the Tantrics and scholars of Kaushik's and Sāyaṇa's ilk. The word *Kṛtyā* is derived from the root *Kṛnj hinsāyām* simply meaning to cause violence; while *Abhicāra* means entering the body of the enemy, the adversary. These are meant to suppress and purge the negative elements and tendencies by diligently identifying and intimately understanding them. These negative elements could be the ones that afflict the human body, the mind, the society, the body politic, or the nation, at the mundane or the spiritual plane. Actions include, gathering secrets of the enemy through intelligence and adopting measures to weaken and annihilate the adversary and anti-social elements. All such elements, enemy designs and or infectious diseases etc., are to be purged. Atharvaveda speaks of such treatment in the following words:

*Yattvābhiceruḥ puruṣaḥ svo yadaraṇo janaḥ, Unmocanapramocane ubhe vācā vadāmi te.*[49]

Meaning: If you personally or any of your people are affected or infected, I would tell you about both types of purging – *unmocana* and *pramocana.*

This is a clear hint at things like vomiting, purging and other procedures of detoxification used in almost all therapies. Generically, it may also mean sanitising the society, the administration and the nation, of the unwanted elements. This is another example of Vedic mantras saying things in an indicative and condensed manner that can be applied to a multiplicity of contexts including the spiritual ones.

Atharvaveda stands indisputably at par with the other three Vedas in vintage, value, authority and status. There is a need for a full fledged, deeper, systematic and comprehensive study and presentation of all the Vedas to bring out the real essence of Vedic knowledge to benefit the whole humanity. Scholars must come together and continue to decode and present, the true 'Veda' of the Vedas.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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2. *Ṛgveda,* 4.35.6; *Atharvaveda,* 10.7.14, 20, 11.7.24, 15.6.7, 19.9.12
3. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa,* 14.5.4; *Aitreya Brāhmaṇa,* 25.7; *Gopatha Brāhmaṇa,* 1.1.16 and 3.1; *Chāndogyopaniṣad,* 7.7.1; *Manusmṛti,* 1.23; "चत्वारो वेदाः सांगाः..." in *Mahābhāshya Paspaśāhnika,*

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*Vālmiki Rāmāyāṇa Kiśkindhā Kāṇḍa*, 3.28; *Vālmiki Rāmāyāṇa Bālyakāṇḍa*, 8.6; *Mahābhārata Dronparva*, 21.22; *Mahābhārata Vanaparva*, 187.14; *Mahābhārata Śāntiparva*, 70.50; *Padma purāṇa*, 5.1.50; *Tāṇḍaya Brāhmaṇa*, 12.9.10; *Atharvaveda*, 19.9.12 (*Sāyaṇa Bhāshya*); "चतुर्णामृक्सामयजुरथर्ववेदानाम्" in *Caraka Samhitā*, chapter 30

4. *Ṛgveda*, 1.100.4;सो अंगिरोभिरंगिरस्तमो भूद् वृषा वृषभिः सखिभिः सखा सन्।
ऋग्मिभिर्ऋग्मी गातुभिर्ज्येष्ठो मरुत्वान्नो भवत्विन्द्र ऊती॥

*Ṛgveda*, 10.90.9; तस्माद्यज्ञात्सर्वहुत ऋचः सामानि जज्ञिरे। छन्दांसि जज्ञिरे तस्माद्यजुस्तस्मादजायत॥

5. *Yajurveda*, 30.15; यमाय यमसूमथर्वभ्योऽवतोकां संवत्सराय पर्यायिणीं परिवत्सरायाविजातामिदावत्सरायातीत्वरीमिद्वत्सराया-तिष्कद्वरीं वत्सराय विजर्जरां संवत्सराय पलिक्नीमृभुभ्योऽजिनसन्धं साध्येभ्यश्चर्मम्नम्॥

6. तत्र ऋग् यत्रार्थवशेन पादव्यवस्था। गीतिषु सामाख्या। शेषे यजुः शब्दः (*Mīmānsā Darśana*, 2.10.32–34) cf. *Sarvānukarmaṇī* (introduction); विनियोक्तव्यरूपश्च, त्रिविधः सः प्रदर्श्यते। ऋग्यजुःसामरूपेण, मन्त्रो वेदचतुष्टये। अहो बुध्निय मन्त्रं मे गोपायेत्यभिधीयते। चतुर्ष्वपि हि वेदेषु, त्रिधैव विनियुज्यते।।

7. एवं वा अरे अस्य महतो भूतस्य निःश्वसितमेतद् यद् ऋग्वेदो यजुर्वेदः सामवेदो अथर्ववेदः (*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, 14 kāṇḍa)

8. त्रयी वै विद्या – ऋचो यजूंषि सामानि इति (*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, 4.6.7)
cf. *Mahābhārata Śāntiparva*, 235.1

9. *Gopatha Brāhmaṇa*, 1.29; *Atharvaveda*, 15.7.78; *Ṛgveda*, 9.113.6

10. *Nirukta*, 2.7 and chapter 13

11. थर्वतिश्चरतिकर्मा तत्प्रतिषेधः (*Nirukta*, 11.2.13)

12. *Ṛgveda*, 1.83.5, 6.16.13, *Yajurveda*, 11.32, 15, 22 *Sāmaveda purvarcika*, *Agneya kāṇḍa*, mantra 9

13. *Kaṇava Samhitā*, 40.7, *Muṇḍkopaniṣad*, 1.1.5, *Bṛhdāraṇkaykopaniṣad*, 4.5.11, *Taitrīya Brāhmaṇa*, 3.12.8, *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, 7.1.2

14. अथर्वक्षेत्रवान् ब्रह्मा वेदेष्वन्येषु भगवान्। तस्माद् ब्राह्मणं धर्मिष्ठमिति ह्यारण्यके श्रुतम्। *Aitreya Brāhmaṇa*, 5.8

15. Dayanand Saraswati, 2039 Vikrami, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā*, *Vedaviṣayavicāra Prakaraṇa*, Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, New Delhi, p. 40

16. Ramnath Vedalankar, 1991, *Ārsha Jyoti*, Samarpan Shodh Sansthan, Sahibabad, p. 80

17. शाखायाः शौनकीयायाः पूर्वोक्तष्वेव कर्मसु। विनियोगाभिधानेन संहितार्थः प्रकाश्यते *Atharvaveda Śaunika Samhitā* (introduction of Sāyaṇa Bhāshya)

18. Aurobindo, 2003, *Veda Rahasya*, part 1, ed. Abhayadev Vidyalankar and Jagannath Vidyalankar, Arvind Ashram, Pondicherry, p. 77.

19. *Yajurveda*, 40.3; असुर्य्या नाम ते लोकाऽअन्धेन तमसावृताः। ताँस्ते प्रेत्यापि गच्छन्ति ये के चात्महनो जनाः॥

20. *Kauśika sūtra*, 37.3–12

21. *Ibid.*, 54.11

22. *Ibid.*, 44.1–4, 45.1

23. *Ibid.*, 14.22

24. *Ibid.*, 12.56

25. *Ibid.*, 19.14–17

26. *Ibid.*, 41.1-7

27. *Ibid.*, 26.9–12

28. *Ibid.*, 14.26–31

29. *Ibid.*, 15.12–14, 15.15–18, 28.15–16

30. *Ibid.*, 48.13–22

31. Priyaratan Arsh (Swami Brahmamuni), 1940, *Atharvavedīya Mantravidyā*, Gurukula Swadhyaya Manjari's 13th issue, p. 1-2

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33. See *Atharvaveda*, 3.22.1, 6.45.1, 20.96.24, 7.58.8

34. *Ibid.*, 4.13.6, 7

35. *Atharvaveda* mantras 3.8.6, 6.111.2, 5.3.8–9, 8.1.4 describe some of these prescriptions.

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36. *Maṇi* word has been used in most of the sūktas. However, there are also such sūktas where this word has not been mentioned. Even then Acharya Sayana has accepted these sūktas as *Maṇi sūktas.* e.g. *Aśvatthamaṇi* (*Atharvaveda,* 3.6), *Śakalmaṇi* (1.29) etc.
37. Vaman Shivram Apte, 1996, *Sanskrit-Hindi kosh,* Nag Prakashan, Delhi, p. 846 उल्लिखित जातौ-जातौ यदुत्कृष्टं तद्रत्नमभिधीयते (Mallinātha) Anything best of kind.
38. *Atharvaveda,* 2.4, 15.2 etc. sūkta.
39. The application of *badhnāmi, badhnāt* etc. in relevant Maṇi suktas.
40. 'दीर्घायुत्वाय' इति सूक्तेन कृत्यादूषणार्थम् आत्मरक्षार्थं विघ्नशमनार्थं च जङ्गिडाख्यं वृक्षविशेषमणिं शणसूत्रप्रोतं कृत्वा संपात्य अभिमन्त्र्य बध्नीयात्। 'दीर्घायुत्वायेति मन्त्रोक्तं बध्नाति' इति सूत्रम् (कौशिक गृह्यसूत्रम्, 5.6 (23))। तत्र 'जङ्गिडोऽसि' इति प्रथमद्वितीयाभ्यां (19.34-35) सूक्ताभ्यां 'वायव्यां वातवात्यायाम्' इति (नक्षत्रकल्प,17) विहितायां वायव्याख्यायां महाशान्तौ जङ्गिडवृक्षनिर्मितं मणिं बध्नीयात्।
41. Kapildev Dwivedi, *Atharvaveda kā Sānskritik Adhyayana,* first edition, Vishvabharti Anusandhan Parishad, p. 363.
42. 'वाताज्जातः' इति सूक्तेन उपनयनानन्तरम् आयुष्कामस्य माणवकस्य शङ्खमणिं संपात्य अभिमन्त्र्य बध्नीयात्। तदुक्तं कौशिकेन। 'उपनयनम्' (कौशिक गृह्यसूत्रम्, 7.6 (1)) प्रकम्य 'वाताज्जात इति कृशनम्' इति (कौशिक गृह्यसूत्रम्, 7.9 (9)) 'वारुणीं जलभये' (नक्षत्रकल्प, 17) इति विहितायां वारुण्याख्यायां महाशान्तौ शङ्खमणिबाधनेऽपि एतत् सूक्तम्। उक्तं नक्षत्रकल्पे। 'वाताज्जात इति शङ्खं वारुण्याम्' इति (नक्षत्रकल्प, 19)
43. व्याघ्र एव वैयाघ्रः (स्वार्थेऽण्) *Apte kosha*
44. *Ibid.,* p. 269
45. Damodar Satvalekar, *Atharvaveda kā Subodh Bhāshya,* Swadhyaya Mandal, Paradi, p. 30.
46. Vishvanath Vidyalankar, *Atharvabhāshya,* the translation of तानश्वत्थ निःशृणीहि शत्रून् वैबाधदोधतः। इन्द्रेण वृत्रघ्ना मेदी मित्रेण वरुणेन च। *Atharvaveda,* 3.6.2
47. 'आयमगन् पर्णमणिः' इत्यनेन सूक्तेन तेजोबलायुर्धनादिपुष्टये पलाशवृक्षमणिं वासितं कृत्वा संपात्य अभिमंत्र्य बध्नीयात्। तथा च सूत्रम्। आयमगन् (3.5) अयं प्रतिसरः (8.5) अयं मे वरुणः (10.3) अरातीयो (10.6) इति मन्त्रोक्तान् वासितान् बध्नाति। इति (कौ. 3.2) उक्तवासितशब्दार्थः
48. Priyavrat Vedavachaspati, 1990, *Veda aur uskī Vaijñānikatā,* Shraddhanand Anusandhan Parkashan Centre, Gurukula Kangri Vishwavidyalaya, Haridwar, p. 360
49. *Atharvaveda,* 5.30.2

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# CHAPTER 29

# The *Ārṣa* and *Anārṣa* Tendencies of Vedic Interpretation and Practice (A Study with Reference to Yajña)

*Vedpal*

That the Veda is a Godly Word, is an ancient belief of the Indian intelligentsia. It has also been held all along that the Veda is a book of all true knowledge, as it was revealed by God Himself for the good of all living beings.[1] Despite the availability of true Vedic knowledge for long, with the passage of time and with a decline of the *sattva* qualities or virtuosity in humans and the resultant psychic instability, it became difficult for them to understand and realise the super-sensual objects. As a result, the knowledge became scarce and the correct comprehension of the Veda became difficult. A need arose for texts that could help understand the true import of the Vedic Writ. The *rishis* or the sages, who were seers with a perception of the transcendental objects, gave the correct meaning of the Vedic hymns for the benefit of the inquisitive. An elaborate literature called *Vedāṅga Sāhitya* was brought out for those who found it difficult to understand the import of the Vedic lore even with the help of instructive lessons given by the knowledgeable.[2]

The words used in the Veda belong to are *yaugika* (derivative, and hence of contextually changing meaning), as against those which have a fixed connotation called *rūrhi* words. So, they mostly carry different meanings depending upon the context, and also according to the affix added to the stem or the root word. Moreover, a major factor that helps one understand the meaning of a word, is the sense imported in it by the relationship between the 'adjudged word' and the adjective used for it.

The ancient seers did *tapasyā* (the purgatory form of penance undertaken voluntarily), and devoted their lives to, among other duties, an analytical explanation of the Veda. When Maharshi Bhārdwāj had completed three of his lives with full

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observance of *brahmacharya* (complete abstinence from sensuality), and absorbed in the study of the Veda, Indra asked the emaciated yet firm ascetic, "O Hermit! If I gift you a fourth life, how will you utilise it?" Saint Bhārdwāj replied, "I would devote that life also to the study of the Veda, observing *brahmacharya.*" At this reply, Indra showed him three mountains of hitherto unknown Veda, and presenting only a handful portion from each of the three, he said, "*Veda vā ete, anantā vai Vedāḥ*"[3] which means knowledge carried in the Veda is limitless, and it is not possible to determine and mark its boundary. This episode from the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* not only speaks volumes about the grandeur of the Veda but is also indicative of the tradition of deep investigations of the Veda.

Regarding the in-depth and explanatory study of the Veda, Rishi Yāska is of the opinion: For a person who is not endowed with the same intellect and insight as the *rishis* are, and is not a *tapasvī* (one who undertakes long-drawn voluntary austerity), it is not possible to perceive and understand the Vedic lore. Such a one is incapacitated to realise the true and exact purport of the Veda, as has been said: *Na hyeṣu pratyakṣmasti-anṛṣeratapasau vā.*[4] Reiterating the same pre-requisite of being a *rishi* for understanding and perceiving Vedic knowledge, Acharya Shaunaka expresses the belief: *Na pratyakṣmanṛṣerasti mantre.*[5] (Vedic hymns cannot be rendered manifest to one who is not a *rishi*). In the middle ages the interpreters of the Veda, though armed with the knowledge of words, their formation and sentence structures, were lacking in penance and austerity, and the virtues of a *rishi.* Even those who led an austere life, did not possess all the virtues and characteristics of a *rishi.*

## ĀRṢA–ANĀRṢA TENDENCIES AND THE NEW AWAKENING

### *Ārṣa–Anārṣa*

It is imperative to state clearly, the main meaning of the words *ārṣa* and *anārṣa* while discussing the topic at hand. The word *ārṣa* derives its formation from the verbal root *ṛṣa*[6] which means to move/to go/to proceed ahead. The word *ārṣa* connotes *ṛṣeridam ārṣam* (ऋषेरिदम् आर्षम्) (it is of the *rishi*, and from the *rishi*) and so the idea of *ārṣa* is dynamic, progressive and endowed with a vision for marching ahead. This implies that it can be visualised only by those who have unearthly and trans-mundane insight, who have shed off the base elements of *raja* and *tama* from their self by dint of their austerity and true knowledge, and who have been enlightened, for their having rid themselves of the vices flowing from the sensuality of heart and mind. Such *āpta* persons (persons who become authentically reliable due to their visionary approach acquired through austere penance) are able to visualise through their *ārṣa* vision even that which is beyond the sensory perception and which is incomprehensible to normal minds and mundane sensibilities. Their philosophical ideas and thoughts are *ārṣa.* Probation leading to the unearthing of special information, deep and analytical thinking, exchange of views and opinions are all indicative of a rational approach.[7] The object of the Vedic instruction is the good and welfare of all living beings. Thus that exposition of the Vedic contents can be called *ārṣa,* which is carried out with the aim of making the

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human society progressive, and of its harmonious improvement through spiritual and temporal uplift.[8]

*Na ārṣam anārṣam* (न आर्षम् अनार्षम्) – which means that what is not *ārṣa,* is *anārṣa.* It implies that any reasoning which focuses on something other than human welfare is *anārṣa,* (This includes even the lopsided 'worldly welfare not mixed with the spiritual welfare'). Therefore, it won't be improper to call those Vedic commentaries *anārṣa* and counter-progressive, which in any way hamper the human welfare, promote ill-knowledge, and are instrumental in the lowering of ethical ideas and their practice. Viewed from this angle, the commentaries on the Veda appear to have remained sharply divided along the two tendencies of *ārṣa* and *anārṣa* since hoary antiquity. Even the age immediately preceding the Indian renaissance is no exception.

***The New Awakening***

In modern times, the 19th century is of great importance in the context of Vedic thinking. From the point of view of *ārṣa* and *anārṣa* tendencies, it was a century of re-awakening. In this century, the great ascetic Maharshi Dayanand presented a challenge to *anārṣa* thinking and spread *ārṣa* thinking, so great, that the *anārṣa* stream was checked completely for a while. The *ārṣa* stream of Vedic thought as expounded by Swami Dayanand, astonished his contemporaries and continues to fascinate the neutral scholars, even today.

How the westerns regarded the Vedas can be understood by two statements, representative of their thinking, before the advent of Dayanand, in a letter to his son, Max Müller determined and stated the order of the worthiness of holy books, as follows:

> Would you say that any one sacred book is superior to all others in the world? It may sound prejudiced, but, taking all in all, I say the New Testament. After that I should place the Korān, which in its moral teaching, is hardly more than a later edition of the New Testament. Then would follow, according to my opinion, the Old Testament, the Southern Buddhist Tripitaka, the Taote-King of Laotze, the Kings[9] of Confucius, the Veda, and the Avesta. But this is a very rough classification, and not likely to be accepted by others. There is no doubt, however, that ethical teaching is far more prominent in the Old and New Testaments than in any other sacred book. Therein lies the distinctiveness of the Bible.[10]

Max Müller, while placing the Bible at the very top in the order of holy books, assigned the Veda, a place at the near bottom. Similarly Oldenberg is of the opinion: "Sacrificial songs and litanies, with which the priests of the Vedic Aryans on a templeless place of sacrifice, at the sacrificial fires strewn around with grass, invoked their gods – barbarian priests – the barbarian gods."[11]

According to him, the Vedic priests – the *rishis* – are wild and so are their deities. This impression of Max Müller about the Veda is based on the *anārṣa* commentaries written by the commentators of middle ages like Sāyaṇa and Mahīdhara. Notably, Max Müller edited the Ṛgveda with Sāyaṇa's commentary during the period 1849-1875.

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***The Influence of Ārṣa Thinking***

A few years after his version of the *Ṛgveda,* Max Müller came by the *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā,* and Dayanand's *Commentary on the Veda* which had flowed from the *ārṣa* intellect and insight of Maharshi Dayanand. Their impact on Max Müller is clear from his following observation:

> We may divide the whole of Sanskrit literature, beginning with the Rig-veda and ending with Dayananda's Introduction to his edition of the Rig-veda, his by no means uninteresting Rig-veda-bhumika, into two great periods: that preceding the great Turanian invasion, and that following it.[12]

Max Müller, who had given a very low rating to the Veda among the religious books from the view point of ethical teachings, later found the same level of beauty and truth in the Vedic hymns as in the Bible – a point, he emphasised in a lecture on Vedic Deities.[13] Max Müller was a regular subscriber to the *Commentary on the Veda* being written by Maharshi Dayanand (and being serially published), and that he had also read the *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā.* The shift in Max Müller's impressions about the Veda can be attributed to the influence of Dayanand's *ārṣa* thinking.

It will be only in the fitness of things to keep in mind while considering the commentaries on the Veda that many scholars look only at its words and thus lose sight of the real import of its contents. There are very few to whom the Holy Vedic Word is very clearly expressed in its true meaning.[14]

As a result of the investigative commentaries on the Veda, the subsequent literature (which includes literature beginning from the *Brāhmaṇa granthas* up to *Kalpasūtras*) carries both streams of thought – the *ārṣa* as well as the *anārṣa.*

## ANĀRṢA TENDENCIES IN CONTEXT OF YAJÑA

***The Take-off Point of Anārṣa Thinking***

The *anārṣa* tendencies in Vedic commentaries, begin with regarding the *Brāhmaṇa* treatises as the Veda too, though the *Brāhmaṇas* are only explanatory in nature.[15] The literature which was created for the understanding of the Veda[16] was enthroned as equivalent to the Veda itself, though it was created by mere mortals as against the Veda being Divine Gospel. Additions were made to the *Brāhmaṇas* from time to time, which even including many non-Vedic subjects like *Adbhutaśāntikarma* (amazing rituals leading to peacefulness). In such Brāhmaṇa narratives, there is a foppish verbosity at many places and a rather retrogressive thinking.

***The Second Point of Anārṣa Thinking***

The second point in connection with *anārṣa* learnings is carried in the aphorism: *Vedā hi yajñārthamabhipravṛttāḥ* (वेदा हि यज्ञार्थमभिप्रवृत्ताः) which led to a misconception that has gained wide currency. According to this pithy saying the only purpose of Vedic hymns is their use in the rituals of *yajñas.* The *rūpasmṛdhi* principle (the principle of

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transfiguration) professed in the Brāhmaṇa treatises has provided support to this false belief.[17] As a result, whenever a word or even a part of a word was noticed in a hymn carrying a bare resemblance to the activity for which a *yajña* was being performed, that word or its part was associated with that activity.

***Misinterpretation and Misuse of Mantras for Anārṣa Rituals***

Connecting the Veda mantras to various rituals, led not only to a misunderstanding of the Vedas but also made the *yajña* practices non-Vedic in many regards. Let's look at a few examples of the misinterpretation of mantras:

(i) Consider the following mantra of Yajurveda and Kātyāyana's interpretations

*Dadhikrāvṇo'akārisaṁ jisṇoraśvasya vājinaḥ.*
*Surabhi no mukhā karatpra ṇa'āyūṅṣi tārisat.*[18]

Taking only *dadhi* (दधि, curd) which is just a part of the word *dadhikrāvṇaḥ* (दधिक्राव्णः) used in the afore quoted hymn, and focusing on its connoting resemblance with the material 'curd', Kātyāyana[19] has used this hymn for the purpose of feeding curd to the priest and the host of Somayāga (a *yajña* believed to be performed once in three years, and in which the drink named *soma* was served).

The same Kātyāyana has in another reference used that very hymn while performing *Aśvamedhayajña* (a *yajña* prior to which, a horse was released by a king to move around freely all over the known world in the token of the king's universal supremacy. Upon its unchallenged return the horse was to be killed, and its flesh sacrificed). In this ritual reciting the hymn *āhamajāni garbhadhamā* (आहमजानि गर्भधमा),[20] he suggests that the queen, after sleeping with the horse, is being asked to get up – quite a shocking and vulgar interpretation indeed.[21]

Thus Kātyāyana has used one part दधि (curd) of the word *dadhikrāvṇaḥ* for the eating of the curd, and another part *dadhikrāḥ* (दधिक्राः, horse)[22] for the rising of a woman after sleeping with the horse killed as a sacrificial animal in the *yajña*. These two and other such uses (or misuses) of Vedic hymns (on account of their misinterpretation) are the ill-effects of putting into practice the directions carried in the aphorism *vedā hi yajñārthamabhipravṛttāḥ* (वेदा हि यज्ञार्थमभिप्रवृत्ताः). And thus they reflect the *anārṣa* tendencies in their full.

Other such ridiculous misinterpretations of Veda-mantras include the following:

(ii) In order to procure articles for being used as oblations, one should put one's foot on the right wheel of the cart and should ride it,[23] reciting the hymn: *Viṣṇustvā kramatāmuru.*[24]

(iii) While constructing the gate of the canopy where *yajñas* are to be performed, one should tie a knot in the string and recite the hymn *viṣṇordhruvo'si.*[25]

(iv) While performing the *Somayāga,* one of the sixteen priests conducting the *yajña* should take the host out of the bath-water reciting the following hymn:

*Udvayaṁ tamasaspari svaḥ paśyanta' uttaram.*
*Devaṁ devatrā sūryamaganma jyotiruttamam.*[26]

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After this, both the beneficent priest and the benefitted host should recite the following hymn from the Ṛgveda, which is known as *āmhīya* hymn, and should go to *Udayanīyeṣṭi Vihar.*

*Apāma somamamṛtā abhūmāganma jyotiravidāma devān.*
*Kiṁ nūnamasmān kṛṇavadar-ātiḥ kimu dhūrtiramṛta martyasya.*[27]

(v) In the performance of *Sautrāmaṇī yāga* (a day-long *yajña,* to please the god Indra), one is required to recite *Somavadutkramaṇamāgamanam ca.*[28] After that the aforementioned two hymns should be recited while one comes out of the water and heads towards the *yajñaśālā* (a canopy under which *yajña* is performed); the hymns that are being used here are related to god *Sūrya* (Sun) and god *Soma* (Moon) respectively, the meaning of which has no consonance with the purpose for which this *yajña* is performed.

(vi) Though the Vedas do not sanction any animal-slaughter, their mantras were misinterpreted and misused for such practices, in the name of rituals. Consider the case of – *Paśubandha* – a sort of *yajña* in which animals are sacrificed by strangulating them. It will be only proper to note the following extract which professes the hollowness of the *anārṣa* provisions, which were in vogue during the middle ages:

For performing the *Paśubandha yajña,* the animal should be taken to the शामित्रस्थान *śāmitrasthāna* (a place where the animal is to be killed for sacrifice). There its neck or mouth should be tied tightly so that it is unable to give out any sound or cry, after positioning its head towards the east or the west[29] with its feet facing the north.[30] When the animal dies, the wife of the *yajamāna* should carry a water-pot to cleanse and purify the altar as per the provisions detailed herein:

*Paśoḥ prāṇāñchundhati patnī.*
*Mukhaṁ nāsike cakṣuṣī karṇau nābhiṁ meḍhraṁ pāyuṁ pādāntsaṉṛtya*
*vācaṁ te śundhāmīti pratimantram.*[31]

After that the host and the priest should try to propitiate the dead animal with the water, and recite the hymns:

*Manasta... śamahobhya. Oṣadhe trāyasva svadhite mainahisīḥ.*[32]

There is a provision of reciting the same hymn while killing an animal by throttling it at the time of performing *agniṣṭoma*[33] (a ceremony in which oblations consisting of some portion of the dead animal's body are offered to the sacrificial fire). This provision is a telling example of *vadatovyāghāta* (contradicting oneself in the same breath). There is a complete contradiction between the action contemplated and the sense and substance of the hymn being recited.

Due to strong *anārṣa* leanings and the lack of sage-like virtues, Uvvaṭa indulged in absurdity while interpreting the mantras. He attached importance only to their supposed ritualistic use, which people like him falsely projected on to the mantras. अथ देवता मन्त्रवाक्याभिधेयाः।... मन्त्रस्य वाच्यं देवतेति – He accepts the name *devatā*[34] as signification of these two hymns (6.14-15), and has completely ignored the *devatā* (विद्वांसो देवता), the name *vācaṁ te śundhāmi* (वाचं ते शुन्धामि), etc. It is only nonsensical to speak of cleaning the breath, mouth, nose, eyes, ears and other sense organs, and satiating these organs after the killing of an animal.

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Maharshi Dayanand takes *vidvānso devatā* (विद्वांसो देवता) to mean scholarly teachers – both male and female. According to him the purpose of these hymns is to indicate the duties of teachers. When it is said that the sense organs like tongue, eyes, etc., should be cleansed and purified, it is only to suggest that one must conduct oneself according to the tenets of righteousness. The duty of a teacher is not only to impart verbal skill but also to inculcate ethical virtues in his / her students.

Mahīdhara has accepted the importance of the use of hymns for *yajñas* also along with the importance of their *devatā*, saying: *Ataeva 'svādhyāyo'dhyetavyaḥ*[35]

*Iti svaśākhādhyayanam vihitam.*

*Taccādhyayanam pratimantramṛṣichandodevatā-viniyogārthajñānapūrvakam vidheyam.*[36]

However, the interpretation carried out by Mahīdhara too, only furthered the *anārṣa* tradition.

***Distortions of Yajña Rituals and their Exaggerated Importance***

*Tāṇḍya Brāhmaṇa* says – *svargakāmo yajeta* (स्वर्गकामो यजेत)[37] – one who desires a place in heaven after death must perform *yajñas*. As such sayings[38] acquired social recognition and respectability, the tendency to associate every activity with one or the other *yajña* also got strengthened. Furthermore, the elaborateness in *yajña* and the mode and manner of its performance became the yardstick of evaluating a priest's knowledge. Here are some examples for the illustration of this feature of *yajña*:

***Ekāha Yajña***

*Ekāha* (एकाह) type of *yajña* falls in the category of *Somayajña* and is performed, beginning on the day of *sutyā* (day for the satiety or gratification of a deceased forefather). It is also called *ahīn* (lasting in its effect for long) and *satra* (a *yajña* which lasts for a period of thirteen to hundred days). In the *ekāha yajña*, there is one *sutyā*, twelve *upasadās* (donors) and many *dīkṣās* (initiations into a new phase of life).

According to Kātyāyana's *Śrautasūtra* (chapter 22), this *yajña* is of 59 types:

1. *Bhū* and 2. *Jyoti ekāha*: These two fall in the category of *agniṣṭoma yajña* (a ceremony in which oblations are given to fire).

3. *Gaur* and 4. *Āyu* belong to the category of *ukthya* (a *yajña* in which hymns of praise are recited).

5. *Abhijit* and 6. *Vishvajit* both of which (also) belong to the *agniṣṭoma* kind of *yajña*. However, it is to be noted here that if either of them (5 or 6) is performed, the other will have to be compulsorily performed.

7. *Jyoti* 8. *Vishvajyoti* 9. *Sarvajyoti* 10. *Trirātra:* These four (7–10) are the *ekāhas* performing which requires the donation of four thousand cows.

11-16 are six *ekāha yajñas* which are called *Sād Yaskraḥ*. Of these, three are specially named as *anukri, Vishvajichchhilpa* and *śyena*.

17, 19–20 are three *yajñas* which fall in the *agniṣṭoma* category while the 18th *yajña* falls into the *ukthya* category.

The remaining ones, i.e., from 21–59 belong to *agniṣṭuta* category.

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Besides those enlisted above, a mention of some other *yajñas* is also available in Āśvalāyana Śrautasūtra. They are: *Dhṛti, Uśanas stoma, Gotamastoma, Viṣuvat stoma, Vanaspati stoma, Sadyaskriyā, Anukriyā, Parikriyā, Ekatrika, Tryeka, Ajiram, Pancaśāradīya, Vājapeya* – all of *ekāha* category.[39]

The aforementioned *yajña* called *ekāha,* which has multiple names and multiple ways of its performance, appears to be performable in a single day as its name *ekāha* (one day) suggests. But it takes one month to accomplish it.[40] It involves a lot of time, expenditure and donation. There is a requirement of donating up to one thousand cows in case of *Jyoti* etc. types (7–10 above) of this *yajña.* In case of *Ahīnayāga* the number of cows increases by one thousand if the number of days is increased by one. For example: if the *yajña* is of up to three days' duration the number of cows to be donated remains one thousand. But if its duration is four days, then the number of cows increases to two thousand, and if the duration is five days, the number of cows goes up to three thousand.[41] This kind of foppery is to be seen more or less in all *Śrautasūtras.* For example – in *Ārṣeya Kalpa* there is a detailed mention of 60 *ekāhas,* 47 *ahīns* (however, there is a mention of only 33 kinds of it in Kātyāyana's *Śrautasūtra*[42]), about 50 *Satras,* 18 *ayanas,* etc.

If these *anārṣa* tendencies had remained confined to the aforementioned juggling, it might not have resulted into much of a disaster. It has been said – *vivekabhraṣṭānāṁ bhavati vinipātaḥ śatamukhaḥ,*[43] which means those who have lost their sense of prudence have to face multiple types of downfall. Accordingly the retrogressive inclinations in the country went further to spread the habit of drinking and flesh-eating resulting into a sharp downfall of the Vedic culture.

***Surā (wine) and Sautrāmaṇī Yajña***

*Sautrāmaṇī* is the last among the list of *yajñas.* It has been derived from the word *'Sūtrāmṇa'* which stands for Indra, and thus, this *yajña* is related to Indra deva. In this *yajña,* there is a provision for the preparation of wine, the offering of wine as oblations and the drinking of wine.

(i.) bark, *trifala,* dry ginger, *punarnvā,* cinnamon, etc. in all 26 medicines, (ii.) green plants of rice and barley and other such medicinal plants, (iii.) rice and barley grains – all these combinations are crushed into powder in separate pots. Then *śyāmāka* weed and rice are added to each other and turned into food to be offered to gods. Thereafter the powder and the food prepared from rice and barley are added to each other, filtered, made into a paste, put in a pitcher and buried in a deep pit.[44] Finally, cow milk is also added to the preparation.

After the *yajña* is accomplished, whatever is left of the *payogrha* and *surāgraha* is eaten. According to one view, three embers should be taken out of the fire in three *havan kuṇḍas* and put on the right side, for the gratification of the deceased male ancestors of the host and *yajña* should be performed, reciting the following hymn:

*Angāreṣu vā bahiṣparidhi dakṣiṇato juhotyāśvinamuttare, madhyame sārasvatamaindraṁ dakṣiṇe pitṛbhya iti* (19.36) *pratimantram.*[45]

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Another view is that the wine should be given to *Brāhmaṇs, Kṣatriyas* and *Vaiśyas* and then bought back to be drunk. Āśvalāyaṇa has also allowed the smelling of the wine instead of drinking it, saying *prāṇabhakṣo'tra* प्राणभक्षोऽत्र.[46] In the *Śāṇkhayāyana Śrautasūtra* there is a provision of *Praiṣa* (प्रैष.. taking wine and getting intoxicated).[47] These references are also found in *Śrautasūtras* like *Vaikhānas, Āpastamba* etc. These cannot be regarded as *ārṣa*, even though the writers of these *sūtras* have made provisions of reciting of hymns for various *yajña*.

***Vapā Homa***

*Vapā Homa* (वपा होम) is the *yajña* in which animal-fat is used as oblations.

The increase in the *anārṣa* tendencies led to *yajñas* like *Paśubandha, Sautrāmaṇī, Agniṣṭoma* and *Aśvamedha* which further resulted into the wicked practice of using animal-fat as oblations. Extremely contemptible is the practice of killing a horse by strangulating it in the performance of *aśvamedha yajña* followed by the wife of host, sleeping with the dead horse. This *anārṣa* tendency acquired so much of prestige that it finds a mention in the Rāmāyaṇa written by Maharshi Vālmīki, with a detailed description of the activities related to the *aśvamedha yajña*:

King Dasharath, desirous of a son, arranged a *yajña* called *putreṣṭi*, of which *aśvamedha yajña* was a part. The horse to be used in the performance of *aśvamedha yajña* was tied to a post along with the other animals required. Kaushalya tended the sacrificial horse to comfort it. Thereafter the horse was killed with three knives and daggers. Kaushalya slept with the dead horse for one night. Then the fat and the marrow of the dead horse were taken out and crushed. King Dashratha smelt it. Sixteen priests carried out the *yajña* with the organs of the dead horse to be used as oblations.[48]

The afore-quoted description by Vālmīki is just one example of what has been said in the *Śrautasūtras*. For instance:

*Hiraṇyavāso'dhīvāseṣvaśvakanjñapanam. Paripaśavye hutvā prāṇāya svāheti* (23.18) *tisro'parāḥ. Vācayati patnīrnayannaste'mba iti* (6.14, 23.18). *Aśvaṁ tristriḥ pariyanti pitṛvanmadhye gaṇānāṁ, priyāṇāṁ nidhīnāmiti* (23.19). *Praksālitesu mahisyaśvamupa sanviśatyāhamajānīti* (23.19). *Adhīvāsena pracchādayati svarge loka iti* (23.20). *Aśvaiśnmupasthe kurute vṛṣa vvājīti* (23.20).... *Mahiṣīmutthāpya puruṣā dadhikrāvṇa* (23.31) *ityāhuḥ*.[49]

Descriptions, with some textual variations, but essentially similar to the afore-quoted description from *Kātayāyana-Śrautasūtra*, are also available in the *Śrauta* treatises of Āpastamba[50] and Vārāh.[51]

For performing *Vapā yajñas*, the fat of the animal is extracted. But it has been said – *Nāśvasya vapā vidyate*[52] – that there is no fat left in the body of the horse. Hence, it is required that the marrow should be extracted from the body of the dead horse as per the instructions carried in the aphorism *Medo'syoddhranti vapārthe*.[53] There is also a provision for extracting the animal's blood (along with marrow), to be boiled for use as oblation, as per *Lohitaṁ cāsya śrapayanti*.[54]

Like the writers of the *Śrautasūtras*, the authors of *Gṛhyasūtras*, were also guilty of this tendency and they too have made provisions for meat-eating at several places.

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Worth noting, for example, are the references related to *yajñas* like *madhuparka* (in which a mix of honey, sugar, ghee, curd and water is prepared to be served to the deity and the guests), *aṣṭakā* (which is held on the 8th day of the month), *śūlgava* (for pleasing god Śiva), *avakīrni prayaścitta* (the ritual which is held for repentance and atonement for the loss of celibacy).

It was the result of these *anārṣa* dispositions that a number of sects opposing Vedic beliefs and practices came to prosper; the right to the study of the Veda was restricted to a few; and the right to perform *yajñas* for the welfare of the general masses was restricted to a few. Whatever was being done in the name of the Veda was only an extension of the *anārṣa* thinking and practices.

## THE RE-EMERGENCE OF ĀRṢA TENDENCIES

After centuries of flourishing *anārṣa* tendencies in the Indian society, the re-emergence of the *ārṣa* thought was an amazing development and indeed, a new awakening.

Maharshi Dayanand, through his activities and writings like *Commentary on the Veda* and the *Bhūmikā*, created this revolutionary awakening among the masses as well as the scholars. In his *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā*, he has analysed more than thirty issues and beliefs mentioned in the Veda, so that they may be easily understood. The following points deserve to be noted for assessing the vast influence on the subsequent period that flowed from the *ārṣa* tendency induced by the Maharshi.

### *Yajña-Vimarśa*

It is almost impossible to understand the true depth, meaning and connotations of the word '*yajña*' in the Veda, in the perspective of its ritualistic forms. Here is a saying from the *Atharvaveda:*

*Etasmādvā odanāttrayastriṁśataṁ lokānniramimīta prajāpatiḥ.*
*Teṣam prajñānāya yajñamasrjata.*[55]

Meaning: And with this Odana and from this Odana, Prakṛti and Prakṛti's divine knowledge, Prajāpati created the world of thirty-three divinities (eight Vasus, eleven Rudras, twelve Adityas, cosmic energy, and Yajña of evolution).

For the knowledge of these divinities, Prajāpati created the evolutionary yajña and revealed the process.[56]

Perhaps, none can interpret the word *yajña* as used in the afore-quoted hymn, in the context of the *yajñas* as currently ceremonised. The distortion of *yajña* has made the maximum contribution in spreading and promoting the *anārṣa* tendencies. The bases of all hypocritical acts and foppish conduct have been the mode of holding *yajñas* and the activities accompanying them.

In the commentary on the Veda, the Maharshi has interpreted the word *yajña*, in multiple ways depending on the context. The various meanings given by him are: God, conduct depending on education and good instruction, the conduct of a householder, agnihotra, handicraft, architecture, mathematical concepts like multiplication, division, square, square-root, cube, etc.

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Maharshi Dayanand gave a new direction to the Vedic knowledge by interpreting correctly, the hymns which have all along been used for rituals and which are hated by all cultured people on account of their misinterpretation by Uvvaṭa and Mahīdhara on the basis of *Śrauta* treatises. Dayanand also wrested these hymns free from ritualistic activities while interpreting them.

Take, for example, just one hymn and its interpretations. The writers of the *Śrauta* literature have directed that the hymn: *vācaṁ te śundhāmi*[57] should be used while touching any of those nine organs through which the *prāṇa* (breath/life) of the sacrificial animal makes its exit. The *devatā* of this hymn is विद्वांसः *(vidvānsaḥ)*, but Maharshi Dayanand interprets this hymn as one pertaining to scholarly male or female teacher. This interpretation restores the matchless beauty and cogence of the idea carried in the hymn.

***Pañchmahāyajña***

According to Maharshi Dayanand, the set of five great *yajñas* should be carried out by every house-holder every day. They require little material and take up very little time (as against the elaborate and highly expensive *anārṣa yajñas* detailed above). These five *yajñas* are unique even from the social point of view. The *brahma-yajña* is a means of self-promotion. The *agnihotra* is a means of worship of God besides being helpful in cleansing the environment. Both the *pitṛ-yajña* (showing respect to the living parents, grandparents, preceptors, the elderly, etc.) and *atithi-yajña* (honouring the guests who are learned, benevolent and religious) are of relevance at every place, and in all ages. *Balivaiśvadeva-yajña* (offering food to the hapless living creatures) is an act of human goodwill towards all living beings.[58] The essence of Maharshi Dayanand's analysis of all contents of the Veda is carried in this aphoristic message: "Those contents of the *Brāhmaṇa* treatises or of *Sūtra* books which run counter to the Vedic teachings and lead to violent actions should never be regarded as of any evidential value."[59]

Paurāṇic scholars like Girdhar Sharma Chaturvedi now talk of the scientific relevance[60] of *yajñas* instead of animal sacrifice in their performance. All those who carry out *yajñas* as per instructions carried in the *Śrauta* books have completely given up animal sacrifice in *yajñas*. Even the staunchest followers of Paurāṇic Hinduism now, do not resort to the use of offering meatin the performance of even *madhuparka yajña*. The *mānsāṣṭaka* form of *yajña* is confined to *Gṛhyasūtra* treatises, and is not being practised anywhere. This is all due to the sentiments and trends induced by the *ārṣa* leanings propounded and promoted by Maharshi Dayanand.

***Subsequent Vedic Commentators***

Yogi Aurobindo occupies an important place among those scholars of the Veda who appeared after Maharshi Dayanand. Aurobindo took recourse to symbolism. Resultantly, there is no trace of vulgarity in his commentary. From this point of view, worthy of special note are *Hymns to the Mystic Fire* and *The Secret of the Veda*.

Dr. Vasudev Sharan Agrawal has also been a supporter of Vedic symbolism and Vedic Science. For example, he believes: *mana* (mind), *prāṇa* (breath) and *vāk* (power

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of speech) are three fires. *Prāṇa* (breath), *apāna* (flatus) and *vyāna* (vital air of the body) are also three fires. Similarly the use of the word *gau* (cow) in the Veda symbolises many things and hence has many connotations. *Gau* as a symbol is used wherever there is a reference to motherhood in the process of creation. The earth is *gau* (cow) in as much as it produces limitless vegetation and trees every year. On the same pattern, the mothers of all the living beings in the whole universe are all symbolised by *gau*. The rays of the sun are also *gau* which traverse the whole world on account of their *gati* (the movement/speed). The earth, wherever it comes into contact with the rays, is rendered capable of being impregnated (and hence capacitated to produce) on account of the heat of the sun. Similarly, delving deeper into this issue, we realise that *vāk* (power of speech) is also *gau*. It is impregnated by *mana* (mind) which symbolises the *vṛṣabha* (bull).[61]

Many prominent commentators like Pt. Madhusudan Ojha, Mahāmahopādhyāya Girdhar Sharma Chaturvedi, Pt. Adyadatta Thakur, and others hold the Veda to be a repository of all sorts of knowledge and science, culture and civilisation. They have lavishly praised and acknowledged the *ārṣa* leanings and dispositions induced by Maharshi Dayanand, the resultant change in the understanding of the Veda and the new awakening thus aroused.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. The Third Principle of Arya Samaj
2. *Nirukta*, 1.20
3. *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa*, 3.10.11.3-4; वेदा वा एते, अनन्ता वै वेदाः
4. *Nirukta*, 13.12; न ह्येषु प्रत्यक्षमस्ति–अनृषेरतपसो वा।
5. *Bṛhaddevatā*, 8.129; न प्रत्यक्षमनृषेरस्ति मन्त्रे।
6. Pāṇini *Dhātupāṭha*-ऋषीगतौ, Tudadigana
7. *Ibid.*, वि+मृश आमर्शने। (Tudādigaṇa).
8. Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgveda*, 1.1.1 mantra bhāshya
9. The name quoted here is incorrect. The correct name of the book is Tao-Te-Ching of Lao-tzu and not as Taote-King of Laotze (Editor).
10. *The Life and Letters of Friedrich Max Müller*, edited by his wife, 1902, Vol. II, Longmans Green and Co., London, p. 339.
11. Hermann Oldenberg, 1894, *Religion des Veda*, Berlin, p. 3, Translated on p. 73 of *History of Indian Literature* by M. Winternitz.
12. F. Max Müller, 1883, *India What can it teach us*, Longmans Green and Co., London, p. 85.
13. *Ibid.*, Lecture-VI.
14. *Ṛgveda*, 10.71.4; उत त्वः पश्यन्न ददर्श वाचमुत त्वः शृण्वन्न शृणोत्येनाम्।
    उतो त्वस्मै तन्वं वि सस्रे जायेव पत्य उशती सुवासाः।।
15. *Āpastamba Śrautasūtra*, 24.1.31; मन्त्रब्राह्मणयोर्वेदनामधेयम्।
16. Sāyaṇa, *Taittirīya Samhitā Bhāshyabhūmikā;* यद्यपि मन्त्रब्राह्मणात्मको वेदः' तथापि ब्राह्मणस्य मन्त्र व्याख्यानरूपत्वात् मन्त्रा एवादौ समाम्नाताः।
17. *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* 1.4; एतद्वै यज्ञस्य समृद्धं यद्रूपसमृद्धं यत्कर्म क्रियमाणमृगभिवदति।
18. *Yajurveda*, 23.32
19. *Kātyāyana Śrautasūtra*, 10.8.10
20. *Yajurveda*, 23.19; आहमजानि गर्भधमा .... गर्भधम्।।

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21. *Kātyāyana Śrautasūtra*, 20.6.21
22. *Nighaṇṭu* 1.14; दधिक्राः– इति अश्वनाम।
23. *Kātyāyana Śrautasūtra*, 2.3.15
24. *Yajurveda*, 1.9, अह्रुतमसि ...ह्वार्षीत्। विष्णुस्त्वा क्रमतामुरु वातायापहतँरक्षो यच्छन्तांपंच।
25. *Ibid.*, 5.21; विष्णोर्ध्रुवोऽसि
26. *Ibid.*, 20.21
27. *Ṛgveda*, 8.48.3; अपाम सोममृता अभूमागन्म ज्योतिरविदाम देवान्। किन्नूनमस्मान्कृणवदरातिः किमु धूर्तिरमृतमर्त्यस्य।।
28. *Kātyāyana Śrautasūtra*, 19.5.17; सोमवदुत्क्रमणमागमनं च
29. *Vaikhānasa Śrautasūtra*, 10.13; तस्मिन् बर्हिषि पशुं प्रत्यक्शिरसमुदीचीनपादं संज्ञपयन्ति...।
30. *Kātyāyana Śrautasūtra*, 6.5.15, 20
31. *Ibid.*, 6.6.2, 3; पशोः प्राणांछुन्धति पत्नी।। मुखं नासिके चक्षुषी कर्णौ नाभिं मेढ्रं पायुं पादान्त्सर्ठहृत्य "वाचं ते शुन्धामी"ति प्रतिमन्त्रम्।।
32. *Ibid.*, 6.6.4–6;
33. *Śatapatha* 3.6.3.6; वाचं ते शुन्धामीति मुखं, प्राणन्ते शुन्धामीति नासिके, चक्षुस्ते शुन्धामीत्यक्षौ, श्रोत्रन्ते शुन्धामीति कर्णौ, नाभिम्., मेढ्रं., पायुं. पदश्चरित्रांस्ते शुन्धामि।
34. *Uvvaṭa-Mahīdhara Bhāshya: prastāvanā-vājasaneya-mādhyāndinasamhitā*, 1912, Nirnaya Sagar, Mumbai
35. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, 11.5.6.7; अतएव 'स्वाध्यायोऽध्येतव्यः
36. *Uvvaṭa-Mahīdhara Bhāshya: prastāvanā-vājasaneya-mādhyāndinasamhitā*, इति स्वशाखाध्ययनं विहितम्। तच्चाध्ययनं प्रतिमन्त्रमृषिछन्दोदेवता–विनियोगार्थज्ञानपूर्वकं विधेयम्।
37. *Tāṇḍya Brāhmaṇa*, 16.15.5
38. (i) ऊर्ध्वा वा एते स्वर्गं लोकं रोहन्ति ये यजन्ते– *Jaimini*, 1.173
    (ii) अग्निष्टोमसम्मितो वै स्वर्गो लोकः– *Kathaka*, 33.4
    (iii) आहवनीयः स्वर्गो लोकः– *Maitriani*, 1.10.7
39. *Āśvalāyana Śrautasūtra*, 40 p. a. 3.3.11; 4.1
40. *Ibid.*, 4.1, ऐकाहांश्चैतरेयिणः
41. *Ibid.*, 3.1, ये भूयांसस्त्र्यहादहीनाः, सहस्रं तेषां त्र्यहे प्रसंख्यायान्वहं ततः सहस्राणि
42. Vedpal, *Ahīna Mīmānsā* in *Prācyavidyānusandhānam*, Vol. 4, No. 2, December 2009, pp. 1-8.
43. Nitiśatak, 10; विवेकभ्रष्टानां भवति विनिपातः शतमुखः।
44. *Kātyāyana Śrautasūtra*, 19.1.18, 25
45. *Ibid.*, 19.3.20; अंगारेषु वा बहिष्परिधि दक्षिणतो जुहोत्याश्विनमुत्तरे, मध्यमे सारस्वतमैन्द्रं दक्षिणे 'पितृभ्य' इति (19.36) प्रतिमन्त्रम्'।
46. *Śatapatha*, 3.9
47. *Śānkhyāyan Śrautasūtra*, 15.15.9
48. *Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa, Bāla Kāṇḍa*, 14.32–38
49. These sūtras have been explained as follows in *The Śrautasūtra of Kātyāyana*, part II, ed. Vidyadhar Sharma: हिरण्यवासोऽधीवासेष्वश्वसंज्ञपनम्। (Afterwards a cloth is spread and gold is placed upon it, and then the horse is slaughtered.) परिपशव्ये हुत्वा 'प्राणाय स्वाहेति' (23.18) तिस्रोऽपराः। (After making offering relating to the sacrificial victim by 'प्राणाय स्वाहेति' three more offerings are offered.) वाचयति पत्नीर्नयन्नस्तेऽम्ब "इति (6.14, 23.18)। (While bringing the wife/wives the sacrificer reads 'नस्ते अम्ब' etc. a host of mantras.) अश्वं त्रिस्त्रिः परियन्ति पितृवन्मध्ये" गणानां, प्रियाणां निधीनामिति (23.19)। (The wives of the sacrificer go round the horse thrice from left to right chanting 'गणानान्त्वा' and one round chanting 'प्रियाणान्त्वा' and thrice from right to left chanting 'निधीनान्त्वा' by keeping the horse in between like a father.) प्रक्षालितेषु महिष्यश्वमुप संविशत्याहमजानीति (23.19)। (When all the animals are washed then the queen approaches the horse chanting the mantra 'आहमजानि') अधीवासेन प्रच्छादयति "स्वर्गे लोक" इति (23.20)। (The sacrificer covers the horse and the queen with a cloth chanting the mantra "स्वर्गे लोक") अश्वशिश्नमुपस्थे कुरुते "वृषा वाजीति (23.20)।...। (After this the queen penetrates the penis of the

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horse into her generative organ chanting the mantra 'वृषा वाजी') महिषीमुत्थाप्य पुरुषा "दधिक्राव्ण" (23.31) इत्याहुः। (After that the female attendants, helping the queen get up, and the others present, chant the mantra "दधिक्राव्णः"). *Kātyāyana Śrautasūtra,* 20.6.10-16, 21, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Pratishthan, Delhi, pp. 191-192.

Note: See the distortion in the meanings of the Veda mantras! What a heinous crime committed by Kātyāyana and the like! In fact these descriptions are so vulgar that Dr. Vedpal, the author of this article hesitated to translate them from Sanskrit to Hindi. (Editor)

50. *Āpastamba Śrautasūtra,* 20.18.1, 7
51. *Vārāha Śrautasūtra,* 4.4.11, 14, 15, 17–21
52. *Āpastamba Śrautasūtra,* 20.18.11; नाश्वस्य वपा विद्यते
53. *Kātyāyana Śrautasūtra,* 20.7.7; मेदोऽस्योद्धरन्ति वपार्थे।
54. *Ibid.,* 20.7.8; लोहितं चास्य श्रपयन्ति
55. *Atharvaveda,* 11.3.3.52-53; एतस्मादा ओदनात्त्रयस्त्रिंशतं लोकान्निरमिमीत प्रजापतिः। तेषां प्रज्ञानाय यज्ञमसृजत।।
56. Tulsi Ram, Prof., 2013, *Atharvaveda,* Arsh Sahitya Prachar Trust, Delhi.
57. *Yajurveda,* 6.14; वाचं ते शुन्धामि
58. For details see Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya, *Pañchamahāyajñas: The Five Great Duties of the Aryas,* chapter 42, pp. 629-634.
59. Maharshi Dayanand, *Sanskārvidhi: Vedārambha Sanskāra,* p. 100, footnote.
60. Girdhar Sharma Chaturvedi, Mahamahopadhyaya, 1972, *Vedic Vijñāna aur Bhāratiya Sanakriti* (introduction by Dr. Agrawal), Bihar Rashtrabhasha Parishad, Patna.
61. *Ibid.,* p. 17-19.

(Translated from Hindi to English by Khazan Singh Gulia)

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# SECTION V
# Ārṣa Canonical Literature

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# CHAPTER 30

# Vedic Literature: An Introduction

*O.P. Pandey*

Vedic knowledge is limitless – *Anantā vai Vedāḥ*.[1] In the canon of Vedic literature, only the four Samhitās – Ṛg, Yaju, Sāma and Atharva – are regarded as the Veda. Their unity and mutual relationship has been represented metaphorically in a mantra of the Atharvaveda, which describes the Ṛgveda as the life in a body, the Yajurveda as the heart, the Sāmaveda as the hair and the Atharvaveda as the mouth.[2]

The Brāhmaṇa texts, Āraṇyakas and the Upaniṣads contain explanations of the Vedas and detailed discussions on their philosophical wisdom. Thus the Upaniṣads such as *Īśāvāsya* and the others available at the end of the Āraṇyakas are an extension of the knowledge expounded in the Vedas. Also included in Vedic literature, is the vast body of work available in the form of *Vedāṅgas*, which is helpful in the study and constant pursuit of Vedic knowledge and in the accomplishment of religious rites.

All the four Vedas, including the Atharvaveda, emanated from *Parabrahma*[3] - the Supreme Creator or the Supreme Spirit, who brought the Vedas to light through Agni, Vāyu, Āditya and Angirā. That is why they are considered *apauruṣeya* (not made by man) and eternal. The names associated with them are of the persons who elucidated them. In the entire Vedic literature, only the four Samhitās are considered self-evident.

The sūtra-literature which followed the Vedas was composed by the seers. This literature requires proof from the Vedas, and is considered authentic only if it is in accordance with them. The portion which follows the ideas of Samhitās is *ārṣa* or Vedic and the rest is *anārṣa* and *Avedic* (anti or non-Vedic). For example, the portions which promote violence in the sacrificial rituals or the explanations supporting the theory of incarnation by Sāyaṇa and other commentators of the Vedas, are *anārṣa*, inauthentic and non-Vedic. Maharshi Dayanand is a supporter of *ārṣa* and he keeps that portion of

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the Brāhmaṇas and the sūtra-literature which is contrary to the Samhitās in the unapproved category.

A brief introduction to Vedic-literature is as follows -

## VEDA SAṂHITĀS

### *Ṛgveda Samhitā*

Ṛgveda Samhitā comprises a collection of hymns, called the *Ṛcā*. The word *Ṛcā* means sacred composition in verse – *Teṣāmrgyatrārthavaśena pāda-vyavasthā* (तेषामृग्यत्रार्थवशेन पाद-व्यवस्था). Its classification is seen in two ways i.e., in *maṇḍals* and *aṣṭakas*. According to the *aṣṭaka* order, further classification is done in *adhyāyas* (chapters) and *vargas*. The Ṛgveda has eight *aṣṭakas*, each of which has eight *adhyāyas* and each *adhyāya* further has some *vargas*. The total number of *vargas* is 2006, and on an average there are five verses in every *varga*. According to the maṇḍal order, the further division is into *anuvākas* and sūktas. There are 10 maṇḍals in the whole of the Ṛgveda, and because of this number the Ṛgveda is also known as *Dāshatayī*. Every *maṇḍal* is divided into some *anuvākas*, each of which has some sūktas, and in every sūkta there are 10 *ṛcās* on an average. In Ṛksamhitā, there are 85 *anuvākas* and 1017 sūktas in total.

The Ṛgveda contains the description of social, political, economic order and institutions. It also contains material related to philosophy, spirituality, art and other topics which merit serious thought. The philosophical sūktas like *Hiraṇyagarbha, Puruṣa* and *Nāsadīya* dealing with creation, inspire self-analysis. In these hymns one finds a discussion about the creation, the other world, rebirth, psychology, the science of supreme reality, the science of ethics, mysticism and the root elements of the later philosophical thoughts.

Due to the wide spread of the study of the Vedas, one mantra Samhitā got multiplied over time, into a number of Shākhās. In all the Shākhās of one Veda, the original Samhitā remained the same, but there existed variations in the number of the mantras, succession, violation of the order of recitation, alteration in pronunciation and the method of performing religious ceremonies. At one point of time, Ṛgveda had as many as 21 Shākhās 'एकविंशतिधा बाह्वृच्यम्' (*Vyākaraṇa Mahābhāshya Paspas'āhanīka*). However, at present only the Shākala Shākhā is available.

### *Yajurveda Samhitā*

Yāska tells us that the etymology of the word *Yajuṣ* is from the root '*yaj*' – *yajuryajateḥ* (यजुर्यजतेः). According to that, this Samhitā is closely connected with *yajña* (sacrifice). It is also called *Adhvaryuveda*.

*Yajuṣ* has another meaning, according to which *yajuṣ* are the hymns in prose *Aniyatākṣarāvasānaḥ* अनियताक्षरावसानः. (in *yajuṣ* the number and the limit of the letters is not fixed). This Veda has in abundance, hymns in prose, besides the verses.

There are two Shākhās of Yajurveda – Kṛṣṇa Yajurveda and Śukla Yajurveda. In Śukla-Yajurveda only the mantras (verses) are compiled, whereas in Kṛṣṇa Yajurveda the Brāhmaṇa portion is also present along with the mantras.

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Vājasaneyi Samhitā is from Śukla Yajurveda. It has two Shākhās – Mādhyandinīyā and Kāṇva. In Mādhyandina Samhitā, there are 1975 mantras and 40 *adhyāyas*, of which 15 mantras are believed to be *khila* (supplement). The 40th *adhyāya* is well-known in the form of *Īśāvāsyopaniṣad. Kāṇvasamhitā* has 40 *adhyāyas*, 328 *anuvākas* and 2086 mantras.

In Śukla-Yajurveda, important descriptions of spiritual progress and the reality of the mind (psychology) are found along with the inspiration for glorious deeds. The mantras like *pṛthivīṁ mā hinsīḥ*,[4] *pṛthivīmupareṇādṛṁhīḥ*[5] contain a message for protection of the earth. By saying *Māpo mauṣadhīrhiṁsīrdhāmno*[6] a lot of stress has been laid on the protection of water, trees and vegetation. The description of agriculture and different kinds of paddy is also worth seeing.

According to *Caraṇa-vyūha*, Kṛṣṇa Yajurveda should have 85 Shākhās in total but only four Shākhās are found now – *Taittirīya, Maitrāyaṇī, Kāṭhaka* and *Kapiṣṭhala-Kaṭha Samhitā.*

Taittirīya Samhitā has 7 *kāṇḍas*, 44 *prapāṭhakas* and 631 *anuvākas.* In the entire Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā, there are 4 *kāṇḍas* and 54 *pra-pāṭhakas.* Of these 44 *prapāṭhakas* contain only the mantras and 17 contain only the Brāhmaṇa part. In the remaining 10 *prapāṭhakas* the similarity of the *prakaraṇa* and the division in the mantras and the Brāhmaṇas has been fully taken care of. In Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā, there are 2144 mantras in total, of which 1701 have been taken from the Ṛgveda. In *Caraṇa-vyūha,* Maitrāyaṇīs have been included in 12 *kaṭhas.* Of these, seven have been narrated further – *Mānava, Vārāha, Dundubha, Aikeya, Haridravīya, Śyāma* and *Śyāmāyanīya.* From this, it is known that Maitrāyaṇī Shākhā has been counted among the earlier Shākhās. There are mainly four divisions of the Samhitā – *Agnihotra, Darśapūrṇamāsa, Cāturmāsya* and *Saumya Adhvara.*[7] In this Samhitā, there is a detailed description along with the explanations of the fourteen sacrifices, which are *Agnyādhāna, Agnyupasthāna, Punarādhāna, Agnihotra, Darśapūrṇamāsa, Cāturmāsya, Agniṣṭoma* (along with *Ukthya, Atirātra* and *Ṣoḍaśī*) *Rājasūya, Vājapeya, Aśvamedha, Agniṣṭoma, Pravargya, Gonāmika* and *Agniciti.* Only the mantras of *Aśvamedha Sautrāmaṇī* and *Pravargya* are there – the Brāhmaṇa portion connected with them is missing. Of these, the description of *Gonāmika* is not found anywhere else.

In Kṛṣṇa Yajurveda, special importance has been given to this *Kāṭhaka Shākhā.* According to Patañjali's Vyākaraṇa Mahābhāshya, at one time, this Shākhā was famous in every village – *Grāme grāme, kaṭhaṁ kālāpakaṁ ca procyate.*[8] In *Caraṇavyūha* 12 *Kaṭhas* are mentioned – *Caraka, Āhvaraka, Bhrājiṣṭhalakaṭha, Prācyakaṭha, Kapiṣṭhalakaṭha, Vārāyaṇīya, Cārāyaṇīya, Śveta, Śvetāśvatara, Aupamanyava, Pātāṇḍineya* and *Maitiāyaṇīya.*

There are five parts in *Kāṭhaka Samhitā – Iṭhimikā, Madhyamikā, Orimikā, Yājyānuvākyā* and *Aśvamedhādhyanuvacana.* Every *khaṇḍa* is subdivided into *sthānakar.* In the first four *khaṇḍas*, there are 40 *sṭhānakars.* The fifth *khaṇḍa* is divided into *anūvacanas.* There are 13 *anūvacanas* in it. In the entire Samhitā there are 843 *anuvākas* and 3091 mantras. The total number of the mantra-Brāhmaṇas is 18,000.

In *Caraṇa-vyūha, Kapiṣṭhala Kaṭhaḥ Shākhā* is also mentioned in the *kaṭhas.* Dr. Raghuvira published an edition of this in 1932 from Lahore, which is incomplete. Its

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classification is like that of Ṛgveda into *aṣṭakas* and *adhyāyas*. All the eight *adhyāyas* of the first *aṣṭaka* are fine. Its subject-matter is also like that of the *Kāṭhaka* Samhitā.

***Sāmaveda Samhitā***

Statements found in Chāndogya and Bṛhdāraṇyaka Upaniṣads tell us that word Sāma is based on Ṛg. The derivation of the word Sāma also shows the same – *Sā ca amaśca tat sāmnaḥ sāmatvam* (सा च अमश्च तत् साम्नः सामत्वम्). *Sā* means *Ṛk*, and *am* connected with that denotes the notes of the musical scale such as *ṣadja* etc. It means that Sāmaveda, though based on Rg, is primarily in the form of *Gānas* (songs), as stated in a sūtra of Jaimini *Gītiṣu sāmākhyā* (गीतिषु सामाख्या). Therefore, the name *Sāma* is of the songs in the mantras and not of the mantras alone.

All mantras of the Sāmaveda, except ninety-nine, are there in the Ṛgveda. It is said that these ninety-nine mantras must have been there in some extinct Shākhā of Ṛgveda. Sāmavedis hold a firm belief that Sāmaveda Samhitā has an independent form. It has not been taken from any present or extinct Samhitā of Ṛgveda. *Ṛci adhyūḍhaṁ sāma gīyate* ('ऋचि अध्यूढं साम गीयते') conveys only that Ṛk and Sāma are connected with each other as a container and the contained.

There are three types of Sāma – (i) Sāmas based on Ṛg mantras only, (ii) Sāmas based on chanted interjections (स्तोभ) only, and (iii) Sāmas based on both Ṛg mantras and chanted interjections.

Sāmas of the first category are called *Āvirgāna*, of the second are *Channagāna* or *Chinnagāna* and those of the third kind are called *Leśagāna*.

There are two main parts of Sāmaveda – *Ārcika* and *Gāna*. The word *Ārcika* denotes the collection of Ṛks, divided further into – *Pūrvārcika* and *Uttarārcika*. There are no *Vikṛtipāṭhas* of the Sāmaveda like those of the other Vedas. It is a compilation only of *Sāmayoni* mantras, which are regarded as the source material for *Sāmagāna*. On the basis of these mantras, the seers produced *gānas* of various types. The marks given on the mantras of Sāma-Samhitā do not indicate any notes of *gāna* (music), and only denote *udātta* (acute accent) *anudātta* (low accent) and *svarita* (neutral accent).

It appears, from the statements like *Sahasrādhvā sāmavedaḥ* (सहस्राध्वा सामवेदः) or *Sahasravartmā sāmavedaḥ* (सहस्रवर्त्मा सामवेदः) that there should have been one thousand Shākhās of Sāmaveda. However, scholars unanimously hold the view that the word 'अध्वा' or 'वर्त्मा' does not mean Shākhā, but means various ways of Sāmagāna (musical recitation of *Sāma*). While commenting on Mīmāṃsā sūtra *Athaikatvād vikalpaḥ syāt* (अथैकत्वाद् विकल्पः स्यात्), Shabaraswamī says: *Sāmavede santi sahasraṁ gītyupāyāḥ*. Despite the easily available evidence of Sāmaveda having a large number of Shākhās, only three Shākhās are available at present – *Kauthumī*, *Rāṇāyanīyā* and *Jaiminīyā*.

From the point of view of Samhitā, there is no difference caused by the order of the mantras in these *Kauthuma and Rāṇāyanīya Shākhās*; and the difference lies only in the manner of calculation. In one of these, the counting is done through *prapāṭhakas*, *ardhaprapāṭhakas* and *daśatīs*, whereas in the other *Shākhā*, it is done through *adhyāyas*, *khaṇḍas* and mantras. In both the *Shākhās*, there is also some difference caused by the

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pronunciation of the *svaras* (vowels). For example, where *Kauthumiyas* (people of *Kauthumiya shākhā*) use pronunciations like *Hāu* (हाउ) and *Rāyi* (रायि), Rāṇāyanīyas pronounce the same as *Hāvu* (हावु) and *Rāi* (राइ). Similarly, Rgvedīya and Kauthumīya pronounce *Vājeṣuno* (वाजेषुनो) whereas those who study other Shākhās pronounce it as *Vājeṣuṇo* (वाजेषुणो).

***Atharvaveda Samhitā***

This Veda is known by many a name. *Atharvaveda* contains maximum number of mantras seen by the seer Atharvā, and hence, the name. According to Nirukta[9] and Gopatha-Brāhmaṇa, the literal meaning of *Atharvan* is – devoid of motion or steady. Being a collection of the mantras seen with the mind's eye by the seer Aṅgira or his descendants, *Gopatha Brāhmaṇa* has called it Aṅgirasa Veda. *Brahmaveda* is another ancient name of this Veda, perhaps because of being a collection of 967 mantras seen by Brahmā. The name *Bhrgvaṅgiroveda* is also prevalent because of the extensive descriptions of medical science, treatment and medicines.

Patañjali has mentioned 9 Shākhās of Atharvaveda in Mahābhāshya (नवधाऽऽथर्वणो वेदः). *Śaunaka* and *Paippalāda Shākhā* are the only two that remain.

At present only *Śaunakīya Shākhā* represents Atharvaveda. This consists of 20 *kāṇḍas*, 730 sūktas and 5987 mantras. Among these, 6th, 19th and 20th *kāṇḍas* are the largest, with 454, 453 and 957 mantras, respectively.

Two editions of *Paippalāda Shākhā*, one each from America and India, have been published. However, both are incomplete. Another edition this Shākhā is currently being prepared for publication by the Asiatic Society of Calcutta. It is known from Mahābhāshya that *Śanno devīrabhiṣṭaya*, was the first mantra of this Shākhā.

The Atharvaveda is important for many reasons like the following:

1. Brahmā is the main priest of the sacrifice and the Atharvaveda is his own Veda.
2. The advanced form of the philosophical thoughts of the Ṛgveda is found in the Atharvaveda only.
3. The Atharvaveda contains in abundance, material related to medical science, microbiology and medicine etc.
4. Mantras like *mātā bhūmiḥ putroahaṁ pṛthivyāḥ*[10] denote great respect for nature and the earth.
5. Atharvaveda is considered useful from the point of view of this world as well as the other world. It helps one in the accomplishment of peace and nourishing actions.

## BRĀHMAṆA TREATISES

From an etymological point of view, *Brāhmaṇa* has been derived from the word Brahma with the suffix 'aṇ' (अण्) added to it. The word 'Brāhma' has two meanings – mantra (sacred text) and yajña (sacrifice). So the texts in which the application of the mantras has been explained from sacrificial point of view are termed the Brāhmaṇas. Even those who do not accept the authenticity of the Brāhmaṇas like that of the mantras, consider

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them to be explanations of the Vedas. One of the great difficulties in accepting the Brāhmaṇas as Vedas is that their *Vikṛti-pāṭhas* have not been arranged as required.

The main subject of the Brāhmaṇa treatises is the description of *yajña* (sacrifice or duty), presenting all its aspects. The two main parts of this discussion are – *Vidhi* and *Arthavāda. Vidhi* means the method – when, where, how and by whom, should the sacrifice be performed. *Yāga-vidhis* inspire one to perform dutiful actions and help one understand that which was not understood earlier.

Why should one perform *Agniṣṭoma* sacrifice and what does one stand to gain from it? It is human nature to not do anything without such knowledge. It has been said – *Prayojanamantareṇa mando'pi na pravartate*[11] i.e., without purpose even a fool does not do anything. The Brāhmaṇa treatises assure us that performance of *Agniṣṭoma* is the key action that brings all gains, while other sacrifices bestow only a specific fruit. *Eṣa vāva yajño yadagniṣṭomaḥ. Ekasmā anyo yajñaḥ kāmāyāhriyate sarvebhyo'gniṣṭomaḥ.*[12] It has been told that different types of fruits such as wealth in the form of cattle and the brilliance of Brahma (spiritual excellence) could be attained by performing this.

Brāhmaṇa treatises make full effort to establish the reason for specifying a particular mantra for a particular task. In the terminology of the Brāhmaṇa works, this is known as *Rūpa-samṛddhi* which means, to display the fulfilment of the mantra applied in a particular task.[13]

Words like *Vijñāyate* (विज्ञायते), *Pravacana* (प्रवचन), and *Vāg* (वाग्) have also been used in reference to the Brāhmaṇa works. The description of the Brāhmaṇas available, is as follows:

## BRĀHMAṆAS OF THE ṚGVEDA

### *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*

The seer or expounder (*Pravaktā*) of Aitareya Brāhmaṇa was Rishi Mahidāsa Aitareya. This Brāhmaṇa has eight *pañcikās,* each of which has five *adhyāyas*. These *Adhyāyas* are divided into varying numbers of *khaṇḍas.* The 40 *adhyāyas* have 285 *khaṇḍas* in total.

Aitareya Brāhmaṇa has been composed by *Brahmavādīs* in a simple language with discussions about sacrifice. Ṛgveda is famous as a *Hotṛveda,* and this Brāhmaṇa treatise therefore, contains a detailed discussion about *Hotṛ* (*priest*). There are said to be four ancient *Bhāshyas* (commentaries) on this – those of Govindasvāmī, Bhaṭṭabhāskara, Ṣaḍguruśisya and Sāyaṇācārya.

Aitareya Brāhmaṇa mentions Madhyadeśa (central region) with special reverence. According to Pandit Satyavrata Sāmashramī the regions known as *Kuru – Pāñcāla, Śivi,* and *Sauvīra* were included in this *Madhyadeśa.*

Aitareya Brāhmaṇa lays special stress on moral values and the principles of noble conduct and behaviour. It is said that an initiated person performing sacrifice should speak only the truth *Ṛtaṁ vāva dikṣā satyaṁ dikṣā tasmāddīkṣitena satyameva vaditvyam.*[14] Similar instructions include – *Viduṣā satyameva vaditavyam,*[15] *Avatyenaṁ satyamanṛtaṁ hinasti.*[16] Words spoken with arrogance, are the words of demons *Yā vai dṛpto vadati, yāmunmattaḥ sā vai rākṣasī vāk.*[17]

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The *ākhyāna* of *Śunaḥśepa*, in a poetic manner, stresses upon the importance of a life full of action in accordance with the dutiful aims of human existence.

*Kaliḥ śayāno bhavati saṁjihānastu dvāparaḥ.*
*Uttiṣṭhastretā bhavati kṛtaṁ saṁpadyate caraṁścajaiveti.*
*Caran vai madhu vindati caran svādumudumbaram.*
*Sūryasya paśya śremāṇaṁ yo na tandrayate caraṁścaraiveti.*[18]

It is said that without pains, prosperity cannot be attained. The one on the move has his feet adorned with flowers, his soul sows and reaps the rewards, and by the toil of movement, his sins are destroyed. The fate of the person who sits idle, sits, of the one who sleeps, sleeps and of the one who moves, keeps moving forward. *Kaliyuga* is the state of a man in sleep; when he yawns, then he is in the state of *Dvāpara*; while standing, he is in the state of *Tretā* and being engaged in action he comes to the state of *Satyayuga*. Through movement alone, one attains the finest rewards, and one should be inspired by the sun, which is never indolent while moving.

Like the other Brāhmaṇas, Aitareya Brāhmaṇa also employs an allegorical and symbolic style, which enhances the vitality of its expression. The maximum number of symbols have a pairing of the male and the female. For example *vāṇī* (speech) and *mana* (the mind or heart) have been described as a god-like pair – *Vākca vai manaśca devānāṁ mithunaṁ.*[19]

Aitareya Brāhmaṇa also contains much scientific information. For example, the 30th chapter carries a description of the *garbharūpa* of the earth in its initial stages.

***Śānkhāyana Brāhmaṇa***

Śānkhāyana is also referred to as Sānkhyāyana. 'Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa is another name for this. It is said to be connected with *Bāṣkala Shākhā* of the Ṛgveda. The treatise is divided into 30 *adhyāyas*, which are subdivided into *khaṇḍas*. There are 227 *khaṇḍas* in total. The subject-matter is almost like that of the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa.

## BRĀHMAṆAS OF THE YAJURVEDA

***Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa***

Śatapatha is the largest Brāhmaṇa. According to *Gaṇaratnamahodadhi*, the name 'Śatapatha' has been assigned to it on the basis of its hundred *adhyāyas* – *'Śataṁ panthāno yatra śatapathaḥ tattulyagranthaḥ'*.[20] This has been reiterated by way of explanation by Shridhara Shastrivare – *Śataṁ panthāno mārgā māmādhyāyā yasya tacchtapatham.*[21]

It is found in both *Shākhās* of the *Śukla-Yajurveda* – the Mādhyandina as well as the *Kāṇva*. In the Mādhyandina Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, there are 14 *kaṇḍas*, 100 *adhyāyas*, 438 Brāhmaṇas and 7624 *kaṇḍikas*. The Śatapatha contains the narration of the rules and regulations of the sacrifices along with their parts and subparts.

The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa also has some interesting symbolic explanations of the sacrifices. One allegory deals with the personification of the sacrifice stating that *yajña* (sacrifice) is *puruṣa* (a man), *Havirddhāna* is his head, *Āhvanīya* is the mouth, while

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*Agnīdhrīya* and *Mārjālīya* are the two arms. The allegory of *srṣṭiyajña* is also worth mentioning, according to which *Saṃvatsara* (the year) is the *yajamāna* (the person who performs sacrifice), *Ṛtus* (seasons) are the priests, *Vasanta* (spring season) is *Āgnīdhra* (*Agnibāhu*), therefore in *vasanta* the fire breaks in a forest, *Grīṣma-ṛtu* (summer season) is the *Adhvaryu* because it generates heat, *Varṣā* (Rain) is *Udgātā*, because rain is often accompanied by a loud sound, and *Prajā* is *Brahmavati. Hemanta* (cold season) is *hotā* (the priest who invokes gods at a sacrifice).

In the tenth *kāṇḍa*, there is a special discussion on *Pañcamahāyajñas* – *Bhūta-yajña, Manusya-yajña, Pitryajña, Deva-yajña* and *Brahma-yajña*. The study of the various *Vedāṅgas* (*Anuśāsana*), *Vākovākya, Itihāsa, Purāṇa* and *Nārāśaṃsī gāthās* is the offering of madhu (the honey) for the *devatās*. The statements like *Adhvaro vai yajñaḥ* etc., prove that Śatapatha does not condone violence in *yajña* or the sacrifice.

***Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa and Kāṭhaka Brāhmaṇa***

In this *Shākhā*, Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa is the only complete Brāhmaṇa available. Some parts of the Kāṭhaka Brāhmaṇa are also found. The treatise is divided into three *kāṇḍas* and *aṣṭakas*. The first two *kāṇḍas* have eight *adhyāyas* (chapters) or *prapāṭhakas* each, while the third *kāṇḍa*, has 12 adhyāyas or *prapāṭhakas*. These have also been called '*Praśna*' by Bhaṭṭa-bhāskara in his commentary. There is another subdivision into *anuvākas*, which are 353 in number.

## BRĀHMAṆAS OF THE SĀMAVEDA

***Tāṇḍya Brāhamaṇa***

Tāṇḍī or Tāṇḍya Brāhamaṇa, according to tradition, is believed to have been thus named, because it was composed by some Ācārya of the Sāmaveda named Tāṇḍī. This Brāhmaṇa is also called Pañcaviṁśa Brāhmaṇa because of being divided into 25 adhyāyas. It is also known as the Mahābrāhmaṇa and the Prauḍhabrāhmaṇa because of its expansive form and the venerability of its subject-matter. The main subject of the Tāṇḍya-brāhmaṇa is the somayāga (a great triennial sacrifice in which the soma juice is consumed). In this the Audagātra pakṣa of all the Somayāgas (from Ekāha to satrayāgas) has been discussed in detail along with their parts and subparts.

***Saḍviṃśa Brāhmaṇa***

The Ṣaḍviṃśa Brāhmaṇa has been regarded as a part of the Tāṇḍya Brāhmaṇa. Six chapters are to be found in the Saḍviṃśa Brāhmaṇa.

***Sāmavidhāna Brāhmaṇa***

The subjects propounded in the Sāmavidhāna Brāhmaṇa, fall mostly in the field of Dharmaśāstra. This Brāhmaṇa covers along with Śrautayāgas, topics like Prāyaścitta-prayogas, Kṛchrādi vratas, kāmya-yāgas and various spells which are employed for malevolent purposes to achieve worldly aims.

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The development of a perspective regarding *yajña* or sacrifice can be easily seen in the Sāmavidhāna Brāhmaṇa. The materialistic form of the sacrifice, for the execution of which a lot of time and money is required, seems to acquire a simpler form. The developed form of sacrifice, found in the Āraṇyakas and the Upaniṣads in the form of Japa-yajña and Svādhyāya-yajña has its roots in this Brāhmaṇa.

***Ārṣeya Brāhmaṇa***

This contains information about the seers of the Sāmaveda, and names of the songs along with their variations. The songs are generally named after the seers who composed them.

***Devatādhyāya Brāhmaṇa***

*Devatādhyāya Brāhmaṇa* is quite small in size and contains only four khaṇḍas. In it, mainly the *devatās* of the Sāmas have been described according to nidhan-bhedas.

***Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa***

The Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa, also known as Chāndogya Brāhmaṇa has 10 prapāṭhakas. The first two prapāṭhakas are a collection of the mantras used in gṛhya-kṛtyas. Therefore, for the sake of convenience this portion is also called Mantra-brāhmaṇa or Mantra-parva. The remaining eight prapāṭhakas are known as Chāndogyopaniṣad. The whole treatise, with the Mantra and the Upaniṣad components, is renowned as the Upaniṣad-Brāhmaṇa.

***Sanhitopaniṣad Brāhmaṇa***

The Sanhitopaniṣad Brāhmaṇa is the illuminator of the obscure secrets of the samhitā. Here 'samhitā' means the 'Sāmagāna' sung continuously with a specific svara-maṇḍal (a kind of Vīṇā or stringed musical instrument).

***Vaṁśa Brāhmaṇa***

The Vaṁśa Brāhmaṇa contains information regarding the family-succession of the seers and the spiritual preceptors who founded the Sāma sect and from whom the order of study of the Sāmaveda proceeded.

***Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa***

The Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa is divided into three parts. The first part has 360 khaṇḍas, the second has 439 and the third has 385, with the total number of the khaṇḍas being 1184. Most of the material of the Jaiminīya and the Tāṇḍya Brāhmaṇas is similar.

***Jaiminīyārṣeya Brāhmaṇa***

Just like the Ārṣeya Brāhmaṇa of the Kauthuma-śākhā, the opening of this Brāhmaṇa, except in the first two sentences, lays stress on the knowledge of the seer, the chanda and the devatā. This is done in the context of the svādhyāya and the sacrifice.

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***Jaiminīyopaniṣad Brāhmaṇa***

This Brāhmaṇa is divided into four adhyāyas (chapters), which are subdivided into anuvākas and khaṇḍas.

## BRĀHMAṆAS OF THE ATHARVAVEDA

***Gopatha Brāhmaṇa***

Gopatha Brāhmaṇa is the only available Brāhmaṇa-treatise of the Atharvaveda. The connection of this Brāhmaṇa has now been established with the Paippalāda śākhā. Ṛṣi Gopatha is the expounder of this Brāhmaṇa, and the treatise is named after him.

There are two parts of the Gopatha Brāhmaṇa, with five prapāṭhakas in the former and six in the latter. The number of the kaṇḍikas in all the prapāṭhakas of the two parts are 135 and 123 respectively.

The subject matter propounded in the Gopatha Brāhmaṇa is quite vast. The first prapāṭhaka of the pūrva-bhāga describes first of all, the process of creation according to the Atharvaveda. The description of the Atharvāṅgirasas as the guardians of the Devayajña (sacrifice to the gods) and dakṣiṇā (the sacrificial fee) is also found here. Thereafter, there is the Praṇavopaniṣad, followed by Gāyatryupaniṣad, which contains a brilliant explanation of the Gāyatrī-mantra. The importance and the duties of a Brahmacārī are also delineated there.

In the other part, the first prapāṭhaka commences with the praise of the Ṛtvik called Brahmā. Thereafter upto the 12th kaṇḍikā, Darśapūrṇamāsa has been described. In the next four kaṇḍikās (13–16) the Kāmyeṣṭis (endeavouring to obtain desired objects by performing sacrifices etc.) have been discussed. After that, the 10 kaṇḍikās (17–26) explain – Āgrayaṇa (the first soma libation at the Agniṣṭoma sacrifice-oblation, consisting of the first fruits at the end of the rainy season), Agnicayana (preparation of the sacrificial fire-place) and Cāturmāsya (the sacrifices performed at the beginning of the seasons). In the first kaṇḍikā of the second prapāṭhaka the Kāmyeṣṭis have been described. Thereafter, one finds information on Tānūnaptreṣṭi (a ceremony in which Tanū-napāt (*naptr*) is invoked and the oblation touched by the one making the sacrifice and the priests as a term of adjuration) (2–4), pravargyeṣṭi (ceremony introductory to the soma sacrifice in which fresh milk is poured into a heated vessel called mahā-vīra or gharma or into boiling ghee) (5–6), divisions of Yajñaśarīra, destruction of the Somayāga (a great triennial sacrifice at which soma-juice is drunk) of others and Somaskanda-prāyaścitta (7–12). This is followed by delineation of Stomabhāga (13–15), Āgnidhra vibhāga, Pravṛttāhutis, Sadasjanyakarma, Prasthita grahas and Darśapūrṇamāsa (16-23). The subject matter of the third prapāṭhaka is as follows – Vaṣaṭkāra and Anuvaṣaṭkāra (1–6), Ṛjugraha etc. (7–11), Ekāhaprātaḥ savana (12–19), Ekāha-mādhyandinasavana (20–23). In the fourth prapāṭhaka, following the previous order, after proposing the third savana of Ekāha the Ṣoḍaśiyāga has been discussed. The subject-matter of the fifth and the sixth prapāṭhakas is also in the same order. Atirātra (1–5), Sautrāmaṇī (6–7), Vājapeya, Aptoryāma (9–10) Ahīna and Satrayāga have been proposed in them.

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## ĀRAṆYAKA LITERATURE

The name Āraṇyaka itself makes it apparent, that these treatises have the deepest connection with the forests. In the solitude of the forests, it was not only natural but also practicable to attempt an investigation of the solemn spiritual secrets. Just like the Upaniṣads, the Āraṇyaka treatises also believe in one *ādi-mūla* (root-power): that there is only one principle pervading different objects.

Only six *Āraṇyakas* are now available. There are two *Āraṇyakas* of the Ṛgveda – Aitareya and Śānkhāyana. Bṛhadāraṇyaka is connected with the Śukla Yajurveda. It is found in both the śākhās i.e., the Kāṇva and the Mādhyandina. Taittirīya Āraṇyaka is the only representative Āraṇyaka of the Taittirīya and Kāṭhaka śākhās of the Kṛṣṇa Yajurveda. Āraṇyaka of the Maitrāyaṇī śākhā is available separately as Maitrāyaṇī Āraṇyaka. In the Kauthuma śākhā of Sāmaveda, the Āraṇyaka part is assimilated into the Chāndogyopaniṣad.

Aitareya Āraṇyaka consists of five adhyāyas, all of which are regarded as separate Āraṇyaka treatises. The first Āraṇyaka contains the description of Mahāvrata which is supposed to be the penultimate day of the *Satrayāga* named *Gavāmayana.*

Śānkhāyana Āraṇyaka contains fifteen adhyāyas. Its 3rd to 6th adhyāyas are called Kauṣitāki Upaniṣad. Seventh and eighth adhyāyas are known as Sanhitopaniṣad.

## UPANIṢADS

The word Upaniṣad is derived from the root *sad* along with the prefixes *upa* and *ni.* It means *viśaraṇa* (destruction), *gati* (to attain/to know) and *avasādana* (to get loosened). By constant study of the Upaniṣads, the ignorance of those striving for emancipation is destroyed, Brahma is attained and the sorrows are slackened. The literal meaning of the word Upaniṣad, is to sit near the preceptor with humility to attain the knowledge of reality.

*Brahma* is the main subject of the Upaniṣads. According to Bṛhadāraṇyaka it is neither large not subtle, neither small nor big, it has neither *rasa* (liquid) nor smell, neither eyes nor ears. It is eternal. The existence and the attributes of the three eternals viz., *Īśvara, jīva* and *prakṛti* (Traitavāda) are also explained in the mantra: *Dvā suparṇā ...bhicākaśīti.*

Only eleven Upaniṣads are accepted as the ancient Upaniṣads. Shankarācārya has written commentaries on ten of these Upaniṣads (Īśa, Kena, Kaṭha, Praśna, Muṇḍaka, Māṇḍūkya, Taittirīya, Aitareya, Chāndogya and Bṛhadāraṇyaka), while three others (Kauṣitāki, Śvetāśvatara and Maditrāyaṇīya) have been mentioned by him.

### *Īśopaniṣad*

In its form, Īśopaniṣad is the 40th adhyāya of the Śukla Yajurveda. It has been named on the basis of the first mantra *Īśāvāsyamidaṁ sarvam.* In just eighteen verses, we find an important and mysterious description of the *Ātmā* (the soul); discussion about an ideal seer who stays firm, wise and unaffected by the worldly objects of the senses, desires and sorrows etc.; proposition of *karma-yoga;* and appropriate adjustment of action and

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knowledge. *Vidyā* (spiritual knowledge) *avidyā* (worldly knowledge), *vyasṭi, samasṭi, sambhūti* and *asambhūti* have also been logically proposed. According to the first mantra, the entire universe is pervaded by God's presence (Īśvarīya sattā). Therefore, anyone leading a life of sacrifice (renunciation) should not be tempted by wealth:

*Īśā vāsyamidaṁ sarvaṁ yatkiñca jagatyāṁ jagat.*
*Tena tyaktena bhuñjīthā mā gṛdhaḥ kasya sviddhanam.*[22]

The second mantra puts forward the doctrine of the *karma-yoga*, whose elaboration can be seen in the Gītā. It says one should aspire to live for a hundred years, performing one's duties:

*Kurvanneveha karmāṇi jijīviṣecchataṁ samāḥ.*
*Evaṁ tvayi nānyatheto'sti na karma lipyate nare.*[23]

***Kenopaniṣad***

Kenopaniṣad talks of, the difference between the Brahma to be worshipped and the Brahma devoid of certain specific attributes, and knowledge of the mysterious form of the Brahma. Through the story of Uma Haimavatī, it speaks of the supreme power of Brahma and lack of power of the devās. It contains an interesting story about Indra and a celestial damsel. The unlimited power of nature has also been discussed from the point of view of the science of creation.

***Kaṭhopaniṣad***

It deals with the *Para-tattva* (the supreme reality). It consists of two adhyāyas, each of which contains three *vallies*. Through the famous story of Yama and Naciketā, the transience of material pleasures, life after death and the nature of the *Ātmā* are dealt with, as the main components of its subject-matter. This Upaniṣad mentions the famous allegory of the body-chariot, reflections upon the truth along with the assumption of death and dreams, the great thought regarding the immortality of *Ātmā* and the practical directions regarding self-realisation.

***Praśnopaniṣad***

Six ascetics, who approached the seer Paippalāda to attain spiritual knowledge, put their questions in such an order that the last ascetic asked his question first. Thus, the order of questions and their various answers by Paippalāda, led to a well-connected doctrine. The six questions discussed, are:

1. From where does pro-creation take place?
2. Which *devatās* are the protectors and the manifestors of this propagation? Who is the best among them?
3. How is *Prāṇa* (vital-air) produced? How does it enter and exit the body?
4. What are the dreaming and waking states?
5. Why and how is Oṁkāra worshipped?
6. Who is *ṣodaśa kalā-sampanna puruṣa* (the one, endowed with the 16 skills or arts)?

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***Muṇḍakopaniṣad***

In Muṇḍakopaniṣad, Brahmā has preached Brahma-vidyā (knowledge of the Supreme-Spirit) to his eldest son Atharvā. The knowledge has been classified into *parā* and *aparā*. The Muṇḍakopaniṣad describes the sacrificial rites as a weak raft for crossing over from the world to the domain of the divine. It says that the wise, dwelling peacefully in the forests, living off the alms, practicing penance and devotion, are freed from *rajoguṇa* (an element of creation) and become capable of reaching the place where the eternal *puruṣa* resides:

*Tapaḥ śraddhe ye hyupavasantyaraṇye śāntā vidvāṅso Bhaikṣacaryyā carantaḥ.*
*Sūryyadvāreṇa te virjāḥ prayānti yatrāmṛtaḥ sa puruṣo hyavyayātmā.*[24]

To attain the goal in the form of *Parabrahma, Praṇava* or *Oṁkāra* is the bow and *jīavātmā* is the arrow. To reach the target, one must free oneself from carelessness and be fully absorbed in the task, just like an arrow that advances straight ahead towards its goal:

*Praṇavo dhanuḥ śaro hyātmā brahma tallaksyamucyate.*
*Apramattena veddhavyaṁ śaravattanmayo bhavet.*[25]

The famous Veda mantra beginning with *dvā suparṇā*,is a part of this Upaniṣad also:

*Dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāyā samānaṁ vṛkṣaṁ pariṣṣvajāte.*
*Tyoranyaḥ pippalaṁ svādvattyanaśnannanyo'bhicākaśīti.*[26]

The two birds in the form of *Jivātmā* and *Paramātmā*, connected with each other as friends, have beautiful wings, and reside on the same tree, which is the nature. One of them enjoys the fruits of the actions in the form of happiness and sorrow, while the other just looks on.

***Māṇḍūkyopaniṣad***

This divides Oṁkāra into three *mātrās* and also adds a fourth part which is devoid of *mātra*. Like the *mātrās* of the Oṁkāra, various mental-states and the different types of *Ātmā* have been propounded. Resembling the four mental stages – *jāgṛti, svapna, suṣupti* and *turīya*, there are four aspects (*pakṣas*) of the supreme spirit – *Vaiśvānara, Taijasa, Prājña* and *Śiva* in the form of *Prapañcopaśama*. Of these, only the last one is the ultimate truth.

***Taittirīyopaniṣad***

There is a tradition of calling *Saṁhitopaniṣad* (seventh prapāṭhaka) as *Śikṣāvallī* and *Vāruṇī Upaniṣad* (8-9 prapāṭhaka) as *Brahmaṇandavallī* and *Bhrguvallī*. Exhortations like *satyam vada* (speak the truth) are found in this very *Śikṣavallī*.

***Aitareyopaniṣad***

This Upaniṣad is divided into three adhyāyas. The first adhyāya discusses through *virāja*, the *Sṛṣṭi-vidhāna* (disposition of creation). The second adhyāya deals with the *Trijanmasiddhānta* and discusses the concept of *punarjanma* (rebirth). In the third adhyāya the *mūla-tattvas* (basic principles) of the Vedic-philosophy have been discussed, according to which one universal soul pervades all the animate and inanimate objects.

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***Chāndogyopaniṣad***

Chāndogyopaniṣad has eight adhyāyas or prapāṭhakas. Along with the discussion related to creation, the importance and meaning of Oṁkāra, the different types and names of Sāma, and the origin and functions of *Praṇava* have been discussed. In the third adhyāya, the sun has been described as *Mahāmadhvcakra* situated in the sky. It also includes subjects like the description of *Gāyatrī, Śāṇḍilya-sūtra, Viśvamiñjūṣā* and *Aṅgirasa's* preaching to Kṛṣṇa. In the fourth adhyāya, there is a mention of the philosophical doctrine of Raikva and the stories of Satyakāma Jābāla and Upakosala. The seventh adhyāya contains the famous dialogue between Nārada and Sanat-kumāra, in which the principle of *bhūmā* has been proposed. According to this, *bhūma* is the unlimited joy, produced from the perception of only the *Paramātmā* in all the directions. *Bhūmā* means to consider everyone as one's own or like the self. In the Chāndogyopaniṣad many kinds of *upāsanās* (worshipping) have been prescribed, which require *vidyā* (knowledge), *śraddhā* (faith) and *yoga*. The *upāsanās* such as Madhu-vidyā, Gāyatrī-upāsanā, Prāṇopāsanā, Nādopāsanā, Śāṇḍilyavidyā, Virāt, Kośopāsanā, worshipping like in the form of a sacrifice, Āditya, Pañcāgni, Vāṅmayī and Dahara-puṇḍarīka are also prescribed. In fact, the very meaning of the word *vidyā* is worshipping.

***Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad***

Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad has six adhyāyas or chapters. It carries a beautiful description of *Hiraṇyagarbha*. Thereafter, it proposes the doctrine that the entire *vastu-jagat* (material world) is produced by *Mṛtyu* (the god of death). It also has an episode which establishes the primacy of the *prāṇa*. There is a dialogue between Gārgya, an arrogant Brahmana and a calm-natured king, Ajātaśatru. It also has references to the great seer Daddhyañca Ātharvaṇa and the great philosopher Yājñavalkya. Here, Yājñavalkya, while dividing his property between his two wives, engages in an oft-quoted philosophical conversation with one of the two – his spiritual companion Maitreyī.

***Śvetāśvataropaniṣad***

The Śvetāśvataropaniṣad has a wonderful mixture of the knowledge of the reality (truth) and mysticism. It critically presents all philosophical doctrines of the time along with *Ātmavāda*. Yoga has been explained in detail. It speaks of the God which is possessed of various attributes and advises devotion towards the God and the preceptor.

## VEDĀṄGA LITERATURE

Vedāṅgas literally mean the limbs of Vedic knowledge. The first mention of the Vedāṅgas is found in the Muṇḍakopaniṣad:

*Tatrāparā rgvedo yajurvedaḥ sāmavedo'tharvavedaḥ śikṣā kalpo vyākaraṇaṁ chando jyotiṣamiti.*[27]

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The six Vedāṅgas[28] comprise the texts prepared for the proper understanding of the meaning of the Vedas, perception of the form of the Vedas, the correct pronunciation of the Veda-mantras, and for performance of the sacrifices according to the rules prescribed. The etymological meaning of the word *aṅga* is also the same *Aṅgyante jñāyante ebhiḥ iti aṅgāni* (अङ्ग्यन्ते ज्ञायन्ते एभिः इति अङ्गानि।).

The Vedāṅga called *śikṣā* teaches the correct pronunciation of the mantras. The purpose of *kalpa* is to prescribe injunctions for the rituals *Kalpyate samarthyate yāgaprayogo'tra* (कल्प्यते समर्थ्यते यागप्रयोगोऽत्र।). Vyākaraṇa and Nirūkta throw light on the meaning of the Vedas while explaining the derivation of the Vedic words. *Jyotiṣa-vedāṅga* provides guidance regarding the time of the performance of the rituals and *Chāndovedāṅga* imparts knowledge of the metres of the Veda mantras. The various sacrifices entail the use of mantras composed in different metres and hence their knowledge is imperative.

In *Pāṇinīya śikṣā* while describing *Vedapuruṣa* (Veda as a man) all the Vedāṅgas are delineated as the parts of his body. *Chanda* (prosody) is the feet of the Vedas, *Kalpa* (rituals) are the arms, *Jyotiṣa* (astrology) is the eyes, *Nirukta* (etymology) is the ears, *Śikṣā* (phonetics) is the nose and *Vyākaraṇa* (grammar) is the mouth:

*Chandaḥ pādau tu vedasya hastau kalpo'tha paṭhyate.*
*Jyotiṣāmayanaṁ cakṣurniruktaṁ śrotramucyate.*
*Śikṣā ghrāṇaṁ tu vedasya mukhaṁ vyākaraṇaṁ smṛtam.*
*Tasmātsāṅgamadhītyeva brahmaloke mahīyate.*[29]

***Śikṣā Vedāṅga***

This Vedāṅga teaches the method of pronouncing the vowels and letters, knowledge of the vocal organs, the (internal and external) effort involved in uttering the sounds or the mode of articulation, and the number and the nature (original form) of the letters etc. *Pāṇinīya śikṣā,* states that just as a cat holds its kitten with its teeth so that the kitten neither falls nor gets hurt, in the same way the letters should be pronounced maintaining proper balance. The knowledge of the accents is also necessary for good pronunciation.

The number of available śikṣās is 34, out of which Paṇinīya śikṣā and Vyāsa-śikṣa are of special importance. Among the other Śikṣās, Yājñavalkya-śikṣā, Vāsiṣṭhī-śikṣā, Kātyāyanī-śikṣā, Amoghānandinī-śikṣā, Mādhyandinī-śikṣā, Varṇaratnapradīpikā, Prātiśākhya-pradīpa-śikṣā, Nāradīya-śikṣā, Gautamī-śikṣā etc. are worth mentioning.

***Kalpa Vedāṅga***

*Kalpa* means supporting and propounding the sacrificial rules – *Kalpyate samarthyate yāgaprayogo'tra iti vyutpatteḥ.*[30] Viṣṇumitra has said that the systematic description of Vedic rites is Kalpa – *Kalpo vedavihitānāṁ karmaṇāmānupūrvyeṇa kalpanāśāstram.*[31]

The Kalpa-sūtras are of four kinds – Śrauta-sūtra, Gṛhyasūtra, Dharmasūtra and Śulbasūtra.

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***Śrautasūtra:*** These were composed for continuance of the Vedic sacrifices. Their main topics are yajñas, darśa and paurṇamāsa, various Somayāgas, Vājapeya, Rājasūya, Sautrāmaṇi and Aśvamedha.

Śrautasūtras connected with Ṛgveda are Āśvalāyana and Śankhāyana. Baudhāyana, Āpastamba, Hiraṇyakeśī (or Satyāṣāḍha), Vaikhānasa,

Bhāradvāja, Vādhūla, Vārāha and Mānava śrautasūtras are connected with Kṛṣṇa-Yajurveda. The last one of these is connected with the Maitrāyaṇī śakhā and the rest are connected with the Taittirīya śākhā.

*Lātyāyana Śrautasūtra* occupies the third place in the Śrautasūtras of Kauthumśākhā of the Sāmaveda. It has ten prapāṭhakas. *Drāhyāyaṇa Śrautasūtra* is connected with the Rāṇayanīya śākhā. Other names of Drāhyāyaṇa śrautasūtra are Chāndogya sūtra, Pradhāna sūtra and Vasiṣṭha sūtra. Scholars from southern India, who belong to Kauthuma śākhā of Sāmaveda, have accepted the Drāhyāyana śrautasūtra only. *Jaiminīya Śrautasūtra* is divided into three khaṇḍas – sūtra, kalpa and paryādhyāya or pariśeṣa, which is further divided into 18 adhyāyas.

The description of the propounded subject matter in *Vaitāna Śrautasūtras* of the Atharvaveda is as follows – *Paribhāṣā (definition), Darśapūrṇamāsa, Agnyādheya, Agnihotra, Ārambhaṇīyeṣṭi, Punarādheya, Āgrayaṇīyeṣṭi, Cāturmāsya, Paśubandha, Agniṣṭoma, Ukthya, Ṣoḍaśī, Atirātra, Vājapeya, Āptoryāma, Agnicayana, Sautrāmaṇī, Gavāmayana, Rājasūya, Aśvamedha, Puruṣamedha, Sarvamedha, Ekāha, Ahīna yāga* and *Kāmyeṣṭis.*

***Gṛhyasūtra:*** These delineate the sixteen sanskāras to be accomplished by gṛhyāgni (domestic fire), five Mahāyajñas, seven Pākayajñas and Gṛha-nirmāṇa (construction of the home), Gṛha-praveśa (solemn entrance into a home), Paśu-pālana (rearing of cattle) kṛṣi-karma (agriculture) and directions (commandments) for destroying diseases.

Āśvalāyana Gṛhayasūtra and Śānkhāyana Gṛhyasūtra belong to *Ṛgveda.* Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra is connected to Śukla-Yajurveda. Gṛhyasūtrras of the Kṛṣṇa-Yajurveda are – Āpastambha Gṛhyasūtra, Āgniveśya Gṛhysasūtra, Hiraṇyakeśi Gṛhyasūtra, Vārah Gṛhyasūtra (this is connected with the Vārāha śākhā of the Maitrāyaṇīya Samhitā. It contains 17 khaṇḍas) and Vaikhānasa Gṛhyasūtra. Gobhila Gṛhyasūtra, Khasdira Gṛhyasūtra and Kauthum Gṛhyasuṭra are connected to Sāmaveda. Kauśika Gṛhyasūtra is the only Gṛhyasūtra of the Atharvaveda.

***Dharmasūtra:*** The Dharmasūtras delineate the various duties, the established rules of conduct, customs, commandments and prohibitions for social life. Bhaṭṭa Kumārila says that all the Dharmasūtras preach the duties of the varṇas (four principal classes described in Manu's code – viz. Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra) and the Āśramas (four stages of one's life). They also included Vyavahāra Dharmas (rules of conduct) and Rajadharmas (rules of laws relating to kings, duties of the kings). *Sāmayācārika Dharma* (rules/duties based on time and tradition) are specially explained.

The doctrines, rules and the arrangements settled by the Dharmasūtras existing in the kalpas had a great effect on the later religious books, especially on the smṛti-literature.

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Gautama Dharmasūtra, associated with the Sāmaveda, is the oldest among the available Dharmasūtras. Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra, Āpastamba Dharmasūtra, Vāsiṣṭha Dharmasūtra and Hārīta Dharmasūtra are some of the other famous Dharmasūtras.

***Śulbasūtra:*** The main meaning of the word *śulbha* is the rope, which probably denotes a measuring tape. As the name suggests, the śulbasūtras acquaint us with the origin and development of the ancient Indian science of geometry. They delineate the rules related to the measurement and the preparation of sacrificial altars.

The formation of sacrificial altars is required for initiating Gārhapatyāgni, Āhavanīyāgni and Dakṣināgni (Anvāhārya pacana). Numerous types of altars are described in these books. For example, with Gārhapatyāgni the right side is expected to be in the shape of a half-circle.

Only the Śulbasūtras of the Yajurveda are available today. The Śulbasūtras of the Śukla-Yajurveda were composed by Kātyāyana. Other Śulbasūtras are – *Baudhāyana Śulbasūtras, Āpastamba Śulbasūtra, Mānavas Śulbasūtra, Maitrāyaṇī Śulbasūtra* and *Vādhūla Śulbasūtra.* All of these belong to the Kṛṣṇa-Yajurveda.

*Ārṣeyakalpa* or *Maśaka Kalpasūtra* of the Sāmaveda occupies a very respectable place among the Śrautasūtras, especially among the Sāmalakṣaṇa treatises. It is considered more ancient than Lātyāyana and Drāhyāyaṇa Śrautasūtras. Maśaka or Maśaka Gārgya is accepted its composer. It contains eleven adhyāyas. *Kṣudrakalpasūtra* was also composed by Maśaka Gārgya. Actually it is the second part of Ārṣeyakalpa, which was later accepted as an independent treatise by the commentators like the other books connected with the Sāmaveda. The treatise is divided into three prapāṭhakas and six adhyāyas. As is apparent from its name, there is a proposition of Kṣudra Śrautayāgas in it. *Kalpānupadasūtram* contains two prapāṭhakas, each of which is divided into twelve patalas. This is an appendix of the Ārṣeyakalpa and Kṣudrasūtra. *Upagranthasūtram* contains four prapāṭhakas. This book, which is like kalpasūtra in its form, deals with Sampat-siddhi, Prāyaścitta, Pṛṣṭhānukalpa of the Sāmas used in various Śrautayāgas etc. *Anupadasūtra* consists of 10 prapāṭhakas. It is only a type of explanation of the Tāṇḍya Brāhmaṇa. *Nidānasūtra* is divided into ten prapāṭhakas. The word *nidāna* accomplished from the root *dā* with the prefix *ni,* means *ādi-kāraṇa* (primary cause). It examines and describes the metres, songs, ukthyas (praises) and stomas (hymns). Kālanda has accepted its usefulness from the point of view of grammar and Dictionary.

***Vyākaraṇa Vedāṅga***

Grammar is the main investigator of the form and meaning of a word. The radical form of a word and its affixes or suffixes cannot be analysed without this. Vyākaraṇa means – *Vyākriyante vivicynte śabdā aneneti vyākaraṇam.*[32]

Vararuci has pointed out five purposes of Vyākaraṇa in his Vārtika –

1. Protection of the Veda.
2. Ūhā – Power of assuming new words and using them at a proper place with appropriate *vibhakti* (case-ending).
3. Āgama – a grammatical augment, a meaningless syllable or letter inserted in any part of a radical word.

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4. Laghu – knowledge of the word in brief.
5. Sandeha-nirākaraṇa – removal of the doubts.

Pāṇini's grammar includes both fields of language – the *vaidika* (Vedic) as well as the *laukika* (of common daily usage). In Aṣṭādhyāyī there are 500 sūtras (aphorisms) connected with the Vaidika grammar, scattered across the various adhyāyas. All sūtras connected with grammar are generally there in the first and second pādas of the sixth adhyāya. The maximum number of the sūtras connected with Veda, are in the eighth adhyāya. Siddhānta-Kaumudīkāra has classified all the sūtras subject-wise, in his Vaidikī Prakriyā.

***Nirukta Vedāṅga***

Nirukta carry explanations of a multitude of words independently, in order to know the meaning – *Arthāvabodhe nirapekṣatayā padajātaṁ yatroktaṁ tanniruktama*[33] (Sāyaṇa). Texts mention twelve Niruktakāras including Āgrayaṇa, Aupamanya-va, Aurṇavābha, Audumbarāyaṇa, Krausṭuki, Kāṭhakya, Gārgya, Gālava, Śākapūṇi, and Sthaulāṣṭhīvi.

Nirukta explains the collection of the Vaidika words (from *Go* to *Devapatnī*), accumulated in five adhyāyas of Nighaṇṭu. Thus Nighaṇṭu is a Vaidika Dictionary in which a total number of 1341 words have been enumerated. Its first three adhyāyas are *Naighantuka-kāṇḍa*, fourth adhyāya is *Naigama-kāṇḍa* (Aikapādika) and the last adhyāya is called *Daivatakāṇḍa*. Yāska's Nirukta carries an interpretation of 230 words of Nighaṇṭu. Narration of *varṇa-viparyaya, varṇa-vikāra, varṇa-nāśa*, use of the roots (Dhātus) in various meanings etc., is the supporting-base of the modern science of language.

***Chanda Vedāṅga***

The knowledge of prosody is a must for the appropriate pronunciation of the mantras. Besides the Brāhmaṇa treatises, the ancient description related to the metres, is found in Śānkhāyana Śrautasūtra, Ṛk-prātiśākhya, Nidānasūtra of the Sāmaveda, Chandah-sūtra of Piṅgala and the Chando'nukramaṇīs composed by Kātyāyana and the other preceptors. The maximum material is to be found in Piṅglācārya's *Chandaḥ-sūtraṁ*.

There are seven main Vaidika-metres Gāyatrī, Uṣṇika, Anusṭup, Triṣṭup, Jagatī, Paṅkti and Bṛhatī. These depend upon the number of letters. There are 24 letters in the Gāyatrī metre.

***Jyotiṣa Vedāṅga***

In Vedic Yāgas, there are intricate and subtle regulations regarding Tithi (date), Nakṣatra (star), Pakṣa (the half of a lunar month, a fortnight), Māsa (month), Ṛtu (season) and Saṁvatsara (year). Jyotiṣa Vedāṅga helps one in this regard.

An ancient treatise known as *Vedāṅga-jyotiṣa* is found, which is connected with Yajurveda (Yajuṣa-Jyotiṣabhāga) and Ṛgveda (Ārca jyotiṣabhāga). It states:

*Vedā hi yajñārthamabhipravṛttāḥ kālānupūrvā vihitāśca yajñāḥ,*
*tasmādidaṁ kāla vidhānaśāstraṁ yo jyotiṣaṁ veda sa veda yajñān.*[34]

Bhāskarācārya also supports this.

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***Prātiśākhya***

Prātiśākhya literature contains material related to Vedāṅga-śikṣa, Vyākaraṇa and Chanda.

These are called Prtiśākhyas because of being connected with every śākhā of the Vedas. The main Prātiśākhyas are – Ṛkprātiśākhya (composed by Śaunaka) of Śākala-śākha of the Ṛgveda, Śuklayajuḥ-prātiśākhya (composed by Kātyāyana) of Mādhyandina śākhā of the Śukla Yajurveda, Taittirīya-Prātiśākhya of Taittiriya śākhā of the Kṛṣṇa-Yajurveda. There are three Prātiśākhyas of the Sāmaveda – Sāma Prātiśākhya, Puṣpasūtra and Pañcavidhasūtra. Atharvaprātiśākhya of the Atharvaveda is also known as *Caturadhyāyikā.*

## ANUKRAMAṆĪS

Anukramaṇīs have played a critical role in preserving the Veda Samhitās. Due to these, no interpolations could be added or the original form of the Vedas tampered with. The composers of the Anukramaṇīs or indexes have counted the mantras, letters and the words used in the mantras. The maximum number of Anukramaṇis were prepared by Śaunaka and Kātyāyana.

***Anukramaṇīs by Śaunaka***

Śaunaka has put together in order the seers, metres, devatās, anuvākas and the sūktas of the Ṛgveda in his *Ārṣānukramaṇī, Chando'nukramaṇī, Devatānukramaṇī, Anuvākānukramaṇī* and *Sūktānukramaṇī.*

***Sarvānukramaṇī composed by Kātyāyana***

This describes in detail, the first word of each mantra of Ṛgveda, the number or *ṛcās* (sacred verses), the name and lineage of the seer of the sūktas, the *devatās* and the metres of the mantras.

***Ṛgvedānukramaṇī of Mādhava***

Anukramaṇī of the Sāmaveda-Kalpānupadasūtra, Upagranthasūtra, Anuadasūtra, Nidānasūtra and Upanidānasūtra are some of the other books.

***Anukramaṇīs of the Atharvaveda***

In the anukramaṇīs of the Atharvaveda – Pañcapatalikā, Dantyoṣṭhavidhi, Bṛhatsarvānukramaṇī, Nakṣatrakalpa, Aṅgirasa-kalpa, Śāntikalpa and other Atharvapariśiṣṭa etc., are well known. Their number is accepted as 72.

The vast literature described above, was aimed at facilitating the understanding of the Vedas, though some of it is not directly useful for the purpose. Moreover, the post-Vedic texts, at numerous places are not in accordance with the Vedas and it is not possible to consider them Ārṣa, and are hence unacceptable. It is imperative, though not easy, to separate the wheat from the chaff, through a critical analysis of this literature. That alone can help preserve, the true meaning and essence or the *Vedatva* of the Veda.

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## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa*, 3.10.11.3; अनन्ता वै वेदाः
2. *Atharvaveda*, 10.7.20; यस्मादृचो अपातक्षन्यजुर्यस्मादपाकषन्। सामानि यस्य लोमान्यथर्वाङ्गिरसो मुखम्।।
3. *Yajurveda*, 31.7; तस्माद्यज्ञात्सर्वहुतऽऋचः सामानि जज्ञिरे। छन्दांसि जज्ञिरे तस्माद्यजुस्तस्मादजायत...।
4. *Yajurveda*, 13.18; पृथिवीं मा हिंसीः
5. *Ibid.*, 6.2; पृथिवीमुपरेणं दृंहीः cf. *Taittirīya Samhitā*, 1.3.6.1
6. *Ibid.*, 6.22; मापो मौषधीर्हिंसीर्धाम्नो
7. *Maitrāyaṇi Samhitā*, 1.9.5
8. *Mahābhāshya;* ग्रामे ग्रामे, कठं कालापकं च प्रोच्यते।
9. *Nirukta*, 11.18
10. *Atharvaveda*, 12.1.12; माता भूमिः पुत्रो अहं पृथिव्याः
11. प्रयोजनमन्तरेण मन्दोऽपि न प्रवर्तते
12. *Tāṇḍya Brāhmaṇa*, 6.3.1-2; एष वाव यज्ञो यदग्निष्टोमः। एकस्मा अन्यो यज्ञः कामायाह्रियते सर्वेभ्योऽग्निष्टोमः।
13. *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, 1.3.2
14. *Ibid.*, 1.1.6; ऋतं वाव दीक्षा सत्यं दीक्षा तस्माद्दीक्षितेन सत्यमेव वदितव्यम्।
15. *Ibid.*, 5.2.9; विदुषा सत्यमेव वदितव्यम्
16. *Ibid.*, 4.1.1; अवत्येनं सत्यमनृतं हिनस्ति
17. *Ibid.*, 2.1.7; यां वै दृप्तो वदति, यामुन्मत्तः सा वै राक्षसी वाक्
18. *Ibid.*, 7.3.3; कलिः शयानो भवति संजिहानस्तु द्वापरः। उत्तिष्ठंस्त्रेता भवति कृतं सम्पद्यते चरंश्चरैवेति।। चरन् वै मधु विन्दति चरन्स्वादुमुदुम्बरम्। सूर्यस्य पश्य श्रेमाणं यो न तन्द्रयते चरंश्चरैवेति।।
19. *Ibid.*, 5.4.4; वाक्च वै मनश्च देवानां मिथुनं।
20. शतं पन्थानो यत्र शतपथः तत्तुल्यग्रन्थः।
21. शतं पन्थानो मार्गा नामाध्याया यस्य तच्छतपथम्।
22. *Yajurveda*, 40.1, *Īśopaniṣad*, 1.
23. *Ibid.*, 40.2, *Īśopaniṣad*, 2.
24. *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*, 1.2.11; तपः श्रद्धे ये ह्युपवसन्त्यरण्ये शान्ता विद्वांसो भैक्षचर्य्यां चरन्तः। सूर्य्यद्वारेण ते विरजाः प्रयान्ति यत्रामृतः स पुरुषो ह्यव्ययात्मा।।
25. *Ibid.*, 2.2.4; प्रणवो धनुः शरो ह्यात्मा ब्रह्म तल्लक्ष्यमुच्यते। अप्रमत्तेन वेद्धव्यं शरवत्तन्मयो भवेत्।।
26. *Ṛgveda*, 1.164.20; *Atharvaveda*, 9.14.20; *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*, 3.1.1; द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परिषस्वजाते। तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्त्यनश्नन्नन्योऽभिचाकशीति।।
27. *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*, 1.1.5; तत्रापरा ऋग्वेदो यजुर्वेदः सामवेदोऽथर्ववेदः शिक्षा कल्पो व्याकरणं निरुक्तं छन्दो ज्योतिषमिति।
28. For further details on Chand, Kalpa, Jyotiṣa, Śikṣā, Vyākaraṇa, Nighaṇṭu and Nirukta, please see Gyan Prakash Shastri, chapter 26, pp. 407-409, 409-411, 413-414, 414-415, 415-416, 425 respectively. (Editor)
29. *Pāṇinīya śikṣā*, 41-42; छन्दः पादौ तु वेदस्य हस्तौ कल्पोऽथ पठ्यते। ज्योतिषामयनं चक्षुर्निरुक्तं श्रोत्रमुच्यते।। शिक्षा घ्राणं तु वेदस्य मुखं व्याकरणं स्मृतम्। तस्मात्साङ्गमधीत्येव ब्रह्मलोके महीयते।।
30. कल्प्यते समर्थ्यते यागप्रयोगोऽत्र इति व्युत्पत्तेः।
31. कल्पो वेदविहितानां कर्मणामानुपूर्व्येण कल्पनाशास्त्रम्।
32. व्याक्रियन्ते विविच्यन्ते शब्दा अनेनेति व्याकरणम्।
33. अर्थावबोधे निरपेक्षतया पदजातं यत्रोक्तं तन्निरुक्तम
34. वेदाः हि यज्ञार्थमभिप्रवृत्ताः कालानुपूर्वा विहिताश्च यज्ञाः, तस्मादिदं कालविधानशास्त्रं यो ज्योतिषं वेद स वेद यज्ञान्। For Its translation see Darshaney Lokesh, *The Almanacs deviating from the Vedic Seasons*, chapter 41, p. 618-619.

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CHAPTER 31

# The Exposition of the Upanishads by Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi*

*Lala Lajpat Rai*

"In the whole world there is no study, except that of the originals, as beneficial and so elevating as that of the *Oupnekhat* (Latin translation of Upanishads). It has been the solace of my life; it will be the solace of my death," so says Schopenhauer,[1] one of the most celebrated German philosophers. It would have been more in keeping with the dignity of the Upanishads to show their worth from their own texts rather than from the testimony of a foreigner, who never had the good fortune of studying the originals; but modern educated India, with its pride for borrowed feathers, with its aping manners, and wholly un-Indian habits, with its love for superficial knowledge, with its adoration for empty titles, and with its scepticism towards, and disbelief in, all that is ancestral property in the domain of intellect, considers the original to be unworthy of the time and labour, which their study demands. They prefer to have their information second hand, and it is only by means of translations that they choose to have a knowledge of their sacred books. *Indians,* direct descendants of the authors of the Upanishads, going to Europeans for knowledge of their sacred contents, is a fact which speaks volumes of disgrace and degradation, and it is no wonder, then, that their philosophy – the philosophy of the mighty Aryans of ancient India is said to be "the mental produce of an unprogressive portion of mankind;... the thoughts of thinkers of a lower race, of a people of stationery culture, whose intellectual growth stands almost apart from the general movement of human intelligence."[2] To give the reader a faint idea of the sympathy and broad-mindedness, with which these pretentious saviours of India and Indian literature approach the best and the sublimest productions of the human mind in India, I will give one more quotation from the same author (Archibald Edward Gough). Says he -

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> In treating of Indian philosophy, a writer has to deal with thoughts of a *lower order than the thoughts of the every-day life of Europe.* Looking at the language he inherits and the general medium of intelligence in which he lives, the thoughts of the European are rich with the substance of Hebrew, Greek, and Christian culture. It is to be noted also that such *rudiments* of *philosophic thought* as are to be found in the Indian cosmologies are embedded in masses of religious imagery of a rude and inartistic kind. ...The great difficulty lies in this, that a *low order of ideas has to be expressed in a high order of terms and* that the English words suggest a wealth of analysis and association *altogether foreign to the thoughts that are to be reproduced.* ...However vigilant he may be, a writer on Indian philosophy will find it hard, — to *present the fact as he finds them without prejudice and without predilection. It is all but impossible to place one-self in the position of the ancient Indian sages, –to see things as they saw them and to name them in the names they gave them. The effort is nothing less* than an endeavour to revert to a ruder *type of mental structure, to put aside hereditary culture, and to become for the time barbarians.*[3]

The interesting character of the writing is the only excuse for this lengthy quotation. This is how one of the so-called oriental scholars of the day esteems our philosophy, the philosophy about which Schopenhauer passed the verdict reproduced above.

It is only Indians who can believe that men, who still cling to Christianity as the solace of their lives, can properly understand and appreciate the sublime and lofty sense of the philosophy of the Upanishads. Let us turn to another, who assumes the garb of an impartial student, and who, to do justice to the man, seems to have been, to a certain extent, influenced by the immortal truths contained in them. Says Max Müller-

> Whatever other scholars may think of the difficulty of translating the Upanishads,... I know of few Sanskrit texts presenting more formidable problems to the translator than these philosophical treaties... But I know full well how much still remains to be done both in restoring a correct text and *in discovering the original meaning of the Upanishads;* and I have again and again had to translate certain passages tentatively only, or following the commentators, though conscious all the time that the meaning which they extract from the text cannot be the right one. ...The real difficulties are of the very different character. They consist in the extraordinary number of passages which seem to us utterly meaningless and irrational or at all events so far-fetched that we can hardly believe that the same authors, who can express the deepest thoughts on religion and philosophy with clearness, nay with a kind of poetical eloquence, could have uttered in the same breath such utter rubbish. Some of the sacrificial technicalities and their philosophical interpretations, with which the Upanishads abound, may perhaps in time assume a clearer meaning, when we shall have more fully mastered the intricacies of the Vedic ceremonial. But there will always remain in the Upanishads vast amount of what we can only call meaningless jargon and for the presence of which in these ancient mines of thought, I for my own part feel quite unable to account.[4]

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Here is a condemnation of his translation and a condemnation of the original in one and the same breath. This should open the eyes of all those Indians, who have been taking the translations of Sanskrit works by these European scholars to be gospel truth. No wonder then, if disgusted with these translations, Guru Datta Vidyarthi resolved "to disabuse his half-educated countrymen of their folly." This is the sentence which I find in his diary, dated August 30, 1888, where he writes, "I have read Müller on the Upanishads. How wrong he goes! sorry! no one to correct him and disabuse our half-educated countrymen of their folly." On the 7th (not 9th as mentioned by Lalaji)[5] of the next month, i.e., September, we find him busy in his noble but pleasant task, as his diary says, "Wrote some 2 pages on Ishopanishad. I have not yet finished the 1st mantra. But as I proceed, the subject grows more and more attractive, sublime and dazzling, so that I can only enjoy to write a paper or two at the utmost." The work was undertaken in very happy moments, because we find that the author was in a mood to grasp the captivating sense of the text. He knocked and it was opened unto him. Only two days previous to this, *i.e.,* on the September 5, 1888, we find him writing, "What a blessing is religion! But one must understand the general system of providence to feel the happiness that religion brings." This noble conception of religion was reproduced and expounded only two days after in his learned exposition of the Ishopanishad.

## ISHOPANISHAD

*Ishopanishad* is one of those ten Upanishads, which Swami Dayanand Saraswati has accepted to be the most ancient and rather the only true Upanishads... Ishopanishad is, in fact, a part and parcel of Yajur Veda and thus we possess a more authoritative commentary of the mantras comprised in this Upanishad in the invaluable Veda Bhashya of Shri Swami Dayanand Saraswati. But the exposition is our author's own, and nobody, who has once read it with his eyes open, can deny that it is a master-piece. The originality of method adopted in expounding the sentiments of the mantras, and in illustrating what is really meant by them, is quite his own. His language is choice and his reasoning elevating. After telling how religion has been grossly misconceived, how artificial, fabricated, spurious theories have been sold in the name of religion, and how the doors of hope have been closed to the honest truth-seeking minds of this world, he proceeds to lay down the basis upon which true religion is founded – "the harmonious *development of all the faculties,* the righteous unfolding of all our capabilities of knowing and being."[6] Thus are we prepared for receiving the first lesson to be learnt in religion, which is inculcated by the first part of the first mantra of the Upanishad, – realisation of the existence of *the universe-pervading* Divinity; because says the author, "the lesson of individual reformation is never received till man has learnt to penetrate through the fleeting forms and phenomena of *Nature to Nature's God."* But before this lesson of individual reformation is imparted to man, he is forewarned of the treacherous spells of this perishable world, "lest he may betake to seek delight in absorbing himself in the thoughts of" the latter. Along with this warning is man cautioned against the transgression of that principle, – justice, without which true individual reformation is impossible, and without which this world would be a world of chaos and disorder.

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Thus are we bidden "not to covet the wealth of any creature existing". This being the negative side of religion, the first lesson of individual reformation taught by the Upanishads, it next begins with its positive side. "Man is enjoined to aspire to live in virtuous deeds for a hundred years in peace with his neighbours." Both these lessons have been beautifully illustrated by a description of the principles of justice and utility, which have been made to dictate that "the universal machinery employed in the institution of nature is so regulated that the personal good of each, on the whole, consists in the good of all... One way the whole current of nature flows, the common weal."

"Nature, enjoins but one religion, and that is Action, incessant, untiring, powerful, energetic Action – for good, for glory, for health and for happiness of Each and All."

Just to give effectuality to the lesson imparted above, the Upanishad next shows the consequences of delinquency and informs us of the fate of "these men after death, who destroy the purity of their own souls... such men surely go to those regions where evil spirits dwell and which utter darkness involves."

Next is inculcated the worship, the true worship, and the mode of worship of that "one unchangeable, eternal, intelligent Spirit," who is "even more vigorous than mind".

It is said that "Material senses cannot perceive Him" and therefore the sage "withdraws his senses from their natural course" (Disengages himself from this world of senses) and perceives the Supreme Being everywhere present (in meditation or Yoga), "who moves all, but himself does not move, who is far to the ignorant but at hand to the wise, who pervades inside and outside of all". One so absorbed becomes so exalted a being, that he considers "all beings as existing in the Supreme Spirit, and the Supreme Spirit as pervading all beings, and cannot view with contempt any creature whatsoever". Such persons, who through wisdom, perceive the unitary Spirit as dwelling in all beings, that "overspreads all creatures, who is entirely spirit without the form, either of a minute body or an extended one, which is liable to impression or organisation, who is the Ruler of the intellect, self-existent, pure, perfect, omniscient and omnipresent," become above joy and sorrow, and these latter never overtake them.

"Blessed are they who enjoy the knowledge of this Divinity, this omnipresent Providence" and who understand that *"the kind Father* has from all eternity been assigning to all creatures their respective purposes." On the other hand, "Miserable are they who worship ignorance," and "far more miserable are they who arrogantly presume knowledge" (the present class of so-called educated Indians who presume to know more than their ancestors, even in the matter of religion, belong to this category).

Saints, wise and firm as contradistinguished from the ignorant described in the previous mantra, proclaim that "Ignorance, the life of senses produces one result; and knowledge, the life of spirit, produces exactly the reverse." But "he who realises both," disciplines his senses and keeping them in subordination to the life of spirit, "passes through physical dissolution by virtue of the life of senses, and enters immortality by virtue of the life and spirit." Having taught so far, the Upanishad proceeds to proclaim the horrors of scientific atheism and idol worship, by saying that "Miserable are they

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who worship atoms as the efficient cause of the world, but far more miserable are they who worship the visible things made of atoms." But what fate awaits him who can properly understand and make a right use of both? "He who realises both, enjoys, after death which is the consequence of the worship of things visible, immortality, the fruit of the realisation of the divine power displayed in atoms." All the remaining mantras but one, that finish this Upanishad, of course, contain prayers, not for wealth, women or worldly honours, but for a knowledge of the truth and the duty. That one says that "the air shall sustain the immortal spiritual body, the gross one shall only last till cremation. O thou! who hast sown the seed of deeds, remember that the same thou shalt reap." The Upanishad ends with a prayer which we repeat "O All-wise Being! Thou art the source of knowledge, inspire us with thy wisdom, lead us to rectitude, and drive off our evil. To this end we repeatedly praise Thee and adore."[7]

This is the epitome of the Ishopanishad, as understood and expounded by Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi, M.A. To those who know a little of Sanskrit, I will show the worth of Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi's translation by comparing it with those of others. Mantras 9 to 14 have proved so many stumbling-blocks to many, and many have spoiled the beauty of the original by bold and meaningless speculations as to their true sense. Amongst them Raja Ram Mohan Rai,[8] the revered founder of the Brahmo Samaj, for whom, I have always had the deepest respect, has unfortunately been one. Now to begin with mantra 9 of this Upanishad[9]: Raja Ram Mohan Rai, translates it as follows:–

> Those observers of religious rites that perform only the worship of the sacred fire and oblations to sages, to ancestors, to men and to other creatures, without regarding the worship of celestial gods, shall enter into the dark regions: and those practisers of religious ceremonies, who habitually worship the celestial gods only disregarding the worship of the sacred fire, and oblations to sages, to ancestors, to men and to other creatures, shall enter into regions still darker than the former.[10]

To my humble self this translation seems to be as distant from the original as the northern pole from the equator. Instead of being a translation of the 9th mantra of the Ishopanishad, it seems to be a bold stroke of the Raja's imagination. Or, if it has been taken from some other commentator, the commentator must have confounded the text with a production of his own bright intellect. The expressions, 'fire,' 'oblations,' 'sages,' 'ancestors,' 'men,' 'celestial gods' have no place in the text, nor is there any word which may have the remotest connection with, or reference to them.

I wonder whence did Raja Ram Mohan Rai get this sense of this text, because the mantra is so simple as one that even a boy in the Middle School with only a little knowledge of Sanskrit can understand its literal sense. Compare the above with Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi's translation of it, which runs thus:–

"Miserable are they who worship *ignorance*; but far more miserable are they who arrogantly presume knowledge."

The 10th and the 11th mantra being closely connected with and in continuation of the 9th, their translation by Raja Ram Mohan Rai is palpably wrong. Then again the

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12th mantra contains exactly the same words as the 9th, only that the expression '*Sambhuti*' has been used in place of *Vidya*. Now Raja Ram Mohan Rai translates this word '*Sambhuti*' into "prior operating sensitive particle, allegorically called Brahma," while Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi translates it into "visible things made of atoms." One fails to understand how the Raja extracted the idea of Brahma from this mantra.

Thus have these noble texts been distorted and words forced to give meanings which dictionaries and common sense cannot support. Still the followers of this very gentleman are never tired of saying that Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi and Swami Dayanand's interpretations are strained.

In the same way, his translation of the 13th and 14th mantras is quite strange. Want of space forbids us to give any more quotations and we leave our readers to form their own conclusions from the above samples.

Pandit Bhimsen's[11] translation of the 9th, for example though totally differing from Raja Ram Mohan Rai's, is just like the latter's quite his own. Both of them have lost sight of the text. Speaking of the text, I have to note that our Pandit (Guru Datta) has followed the text of the Shankar Bhashya, because at that time Shri Swami Dayanand's Bhashya of the 40th chapter of the Yajur Veda had not been published, and therefore Guru Datta Vidyarthi could not have the advantage of having it before him. Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi has followed the text accepted by Swami Shankarāchārya, which differs from the text published by Swami Dayanand Saraswati in the following particulars:-

Mantras 9th, 10th and 11th as appearing in Panditji's pamphlet, appear as 12th, 13th and 14th in Shri Swami Dayanand's Bhashya of Yajurveda, chapter 40th and *vice versa*. Mantra 17th of Panditji's pamphlet is 16th in Swami's Bhashya. Moreover the expression कृतꣳ स्मर of the same mantra *i.e.*, the 17th, occurs twice in Panditji's work and only once in the Swami's, and that only in the end. Immediately preceding this very expression in Swami's Bhashya is क्लबे in place of क्रतो स्मर of Guru Datta Vidyarthi's. The 18th mantra of the latter is the 16th of the former. Again the mantra, which appears 17th in Swami's Bhashya, is not found in Panditji's work as such. It is, in fact, composed of the latter portion of the 15th and the last three expressions of the latter part of the 16th as published by Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi. Also the whole chapter in Swami's Bhashya ends with mantra 17th, while Guru Datta Vidyarthi's consists of 18.

There is a slight difference in the text of the 4th as well as in that of the 6th mantra. Guru Datta Vidyarthi reads *'pretyabhigachhanti'* in the 3rd, while Swami reads it *'pretyāpi gachhanti,'* and hence the difference of translation. Just in the same way, Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi reads *'vijugupsate'* in the 6th mantra, while Swami reads it *'vi chikitsati.'*

I have very carefully and several times compared the Pandit's translation of the text of Ishopanishad with the translation of the commentary upon the same by Swami Dayanand and I can conscientiously say that in my humble judgment and to my uninitiated ears at least the sense of both generally seems to be the same. The only distinction, however, being very clear, Swami's translation bears the impress of that mastery over the stores of the Sanskrit language, which was unfortunately wanting in the

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latter, while that of Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi bears the stamp of some aid having been taken from western sciences, which our author had so largely acquired. In him was or could be witnessed the happy confluence of both the western and eastern systems of knowledge. This was the solitary instance, so far as our limited information goes, of one, whose head had not been turned by a sudden rush of western sciences, whose eyes had not been irrevocably dazzled by the sudden glare of western knowledge, who, notwithstanding a vast acquaintance with western sciences, possessed an intelligent, reasonable and at the same time deep faith in the existence of the Supreme Being as well as that of the soul as propounded by the Vedas. To return to the comparison of both the translations mentioned above, I am bound to say that with the exception of differences that have resulted from the differences of the text, there is hardly any important difference between the two.

Panditji's translation of mantras 4 and 14 does seem to differ from that of Swamiji's, but the real difference, I think can be traced to the rather abstruse character of Panditji's style as compared with the simplicity of Swamiji's notes and commentaries. Thus, although Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi had no advantage of seeing Shri Swami Dayanand's commentary, (in which case he, of course, must have followed him) he, however, anticipated what was to be published in the name of the greatest Sanskritarian of the age, and this fact alone, all else being left out of consideration, would be sufficient to establish Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi's fame as a Sanskrit scholar.

## MANDUKYOPANISHAD

*Mandukyopanishad* is another of those ten genuine Upanishads to which reference has been made above. Just as the Ishopanishad propounds what is true religion, this Upanishad, *i.e.,* the Mandukya, teaches us what is *true worship.* Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi's translation of the Upanishad with an exposition of the same is the most learned and most excellent of all his literary productions. Ancient authorities have been profusely referred to and the quotations display what a vast stock of knowledge and information Panditji always had at hand. To begin with the exposition. Worship, "the first act of pure religion," has been defined to be "a spontaneous declaration of the inmost affections, brimful of genuine feeling, profound attraction and soul-absorbing meditation." And it is "this system of worship" which "is the subject of Mandukyopanishat to furnish." "It enjoins the worship of the Supreme Deity alone, the Eternal Omnipresent Being, the Supernal Soul of Nature. For, what but a true conception, knowledge and realisation of this Universal Spirit, can be consistent with that overflowing, exultant, blissful attitude of the mind, otherwise designated as worship. The worship of the Eternal Being is the only worship that is inculcated in the Upanishads; and this Eternal Being is everywhere named Omkara." Vyas Bhashya, *i.e.,* commentary by Vyas on Yoga Darshana, has been quoted in answer to the question, "Is it by mere arbitrary convention or by some natural process that Om indicates the Ruler of the Universe?" The answer runs thus:– "Surely, the relation between the symbol Om and that of which it is a symbol, is not conventional but actual, and the symbol but expresses the actual relation" ...Since "it is an established fact, with those who know

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Revelation, or those yogis who have realised what the relation between the signifying symbol and the thing signified, is that the words, their corresponding ideas, and the relation between them is eternal or exists in nature, and not by human convention." This very idea is supported by Patanjali's Mahabhashya, 2nd A'hnika commentary on the seventh Shiva Sutra,[12] where *Akshara* has been translated into "eternal and omnipresent." Max Müller also in his Lectures on the Science of Language advances the same idea by saying that "they (the roots) are phonetic types produced by a power inherent in human nature. They exist, as Plato would say, by nature; though with Plato we should add that when we say by nature, we mean by the hand of God."[13] Thus we see modern Europe as represented by Max Müller, ancient India as represented by Vyas and Patanjali, and ancient Greece as represented by Plato, all combined in supporting our Panditji's conclusions. Next to this "the relation of Om and the constant presentation of its signification to the mind, being the two essentials of Divine worship, it is of the greatest importance to know what the significance of the unitary syllable Om is," and why it is that so much significance is attached to this syllable.

> It is not only because Om is the most soft, melodious and smoothly flowing syllable in sound, nor merely because the letters composing Om spontaneously, and without education of any sort, escape the lips of the babe who is just beginning his vocal exercises, but because there is something deeper, dearer and diviner in its significance. It is true that, whereas other names of God are also names of things temporal, (for instance, the Sanskrit *ishwara* is also the name of the governor, even *brahma* is also the name of the universal ether and of Vedas, *agni* is, besides, the name of fire, and so on), Om is only the name of the Eternal, Omnipresent, Universal Spirit. That can only be a reason in behalf of its precision and definiteness of meaning, but hardly a reason for the extremely superlative importance that is attached to it. It is also true that Om is more comprehensive in meaning than any other term signifying God in Sanskrit, or, in other words, that it connotes a number of attributes that no other word or syllable singly does, but even that of the secondary importance. The deepest, and in truth, the highest reason is that the signification of Om is the *key-note* of the realisation of the Divine Spirit. The several letters of Om, with unparalleled exactness, mark the successive steps of meditation by which one rises to the realization of the nature of Divinity. The process of this realisation is exactly the reverse of the process by which the mind acts on the external universe. If the latter be called evolution, *i.e.,* folding out of the internal faculties of the mind, till they become externally manifest, the former should be called involution, *i.e.,* folding the mind within itself till the faculties that were working on the outer plane retire from outside and turn inside for more interior work.

This is what is so carefully explained by this Upanishad, which, after stating *what is Om* (mantras 1 and 2), proceeds to describe the four phases of the existence of God, and concludes by explaining how those very four phases are represented by the different letters constituting the syllable *Om.* The first termed 'Wakeful phase' is that in which

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"God is manifest as diffused in external nature; causing incessant interaction among the seven parts that constitute the organisation of the Universe; determining the disposition of the nineteen organs of thought and correlation that enable organisms to seek their enjoyments in gross palpable matter; and regulating, with precision and order, the physical motions of the Universe."

This is illustrated by the 'wakeful phase' of man, which consists of his activity in day and night up to the time he reposes and begins to dream, as well as by the analogy of a watch-maker's phase, who is manifest in the machinery of his watch and the precision and regularity of motion of appropriate parts. "The second phase is the contemplative phase. In this phase, God is viewed, as living in the interior design, that fixes the relation of the seven parts to each other, or adapts the nineteen functions of correlation to the purpose in view, thus interlinking the several ideas that constitute the design, and giving to the Universe an invisible but interior organisation." This is illustrated by an analogy of the dreaming state of man and designing phase of the watch-maker. The third phase is the *slumbering phase,* where, like the human soul that is folded within itself "God is viewed as Himself, an embodiment of all ideas and principles," himself all delight, enjoying but delight, only manifest in His consciousness, and endowed with the highest wisdom. This is illustrated by an analogy of that state of man, in which he sleeps free from dreams and enjoys complete repose, although in full possession of all those faculties that worked in the "wakeful" and "contemplative phases as well as that state of the watch-maker in which, though possessed of the whole knowledge required for the capability of designing the watch and befitting its machinery, etc., he did not choose to make use of it for that purpose."

The last and the fourth phase is that which is called the "essential mode of existence," *i.e.,* the Atma, the Universal Spirit, in which we should view Him neither as designing interiorly, nor as diffused throughout external nature, nor in the transitional mood between both; neither embodiment of intelligence, nor fraught with volitional consciousness, nor devoid of consciousness; but as "the Invisible, Unimpressible, Incomprehensible, Undefinable, Unthinkable, Unknowable Being, only conscious of self in self, *i.e.,* the Absolute and the Unconditional without a trace of the relative or conditional world about Him, All-calm, All-bless, One and Only." This is illustrated by the analogy of the *personal identity of man* and the self or personality of the watch-maker. Thus does this wonderful Upanishad explain the four phases of the existence of "the Eternal, Omnipresent, Universal Spirit, whose name is Om, and whose modes of existence are represented by the single letters A, U, M respectively, of which this monosyllable Om is made up.

In contemplating the deep significance of अ, the yogi holds before his mind the vast expanse of the universe, with its mighty orbs rolling in their magnificent splendor undisturbed through vacuous paths, carving ethereal waves of unseen exquisite beauty in the ocean of infinity, and contemplates upon the grand meaning of the universe, for, in the words of the Upanishat, the mighty volume

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of nature is spread as a commentary on the nature and attributes of the Eternal Omnipresent Being.

The testimony of the Atharvaveda[14] has been produced on the subject of "the constitution of the universe as typically represented by our solar system." Panditji has readily utilised his vast knowledge of the physical sciences in the exposition of these mantras. The beauty of expression exhibited and the richness of information displayed in the exposition, is our only excuse for this long quotation which I subjoin.

> We approach (in our contemplations), with highest reverence, the Great Adorable Being, who has made this frame of the universe as a living demonstration of His existence, as a highly fitting lesson on His nature and attributes, and who has placed in this wondrous organisation (1) the sun with its luminous atmosphere as the brain, (2) the super-terrestrial space intervening between the sun and the earth as the stomach, and (3) the earth (typical of all planets) as the lower body, the feet. We adore the Great Being in whose creation, (4) the sun and the moon are the two eyes, and (5) heat, the mouth. We adore the Great Being who has made (6) the atmospheres as the lungs, and (7) the directions of space as the organs of hearing. Let us adore Him, the Infinite Being, the Source of all wisdom.
>
> Here is displayed to the mind of the devotee the scheme of perfect organisation. For, is not the sun, with its atmosphere, the brain of this system? The brain in the human body, technically called the *cerebrum* and the *cerebellum,* is an organisation of sublimated elements, a battery of vital powers, the seat of nervous energy, the controller of all motions and functions of the body. And the sun too, like the brain, is a reservoir of sublimated elements, an infinitely powerful battery of magnetic, electric, optic, actinic, caloric and dynamic forces, the seat of combustible, vegetative energy, and of what has been called in geology by the technical name of sub-aerial denudation; the controller of all planetary and cometary motions. And the super-terrestrial space teeming with the atmosphere is truly the stomach, the organ of digestion, refining and elaborating the materials consigned to it. It is in the atmosphere that clouds are formed, vapours attenuated, streams of electricity generated, surface particles of earthly salts and metals volatilised, and the products of all these processes diffused and mixed up, till all is reduced to homogenous fluidity, carried above the lower strata of the atmosphere, there condensed, and then poured out as pure, precious, plant-feeding rainfall, very much like the stomach that, after refining, sublimating, and attenuating the food it receives, extracts from its juicy contents the elements of the crimson vital liquid, and pours it forth, like rainfall, into the heart. Before, however, the materials pass into the stomach, they have to pass through the mouth that by the aid of its maxillary organism divides and re-divides the solid food, till it is powdered down and mixed with saliva and thus converted into fluid material. In the same way, before the earthly materials are consigned to the stomach, the atmospheric space, they pass through the mouth,

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the heat. For, what is the channel that transmits the earthly materials to upper regions? What is it that powders, atomises, and reduces to vaporous subtlety the hard solid materials of earth, or what is it, that dissolves these materials in the saliva of nature, water? It is Heat that does all the work. Impelled by the restless, vivifying, vibratory oscillations of heat, solids are dashed into liquids and liquids into gases.

It is by Heat that gaseous particles, thus endowed with rarity, are borne on the wings of warmth to upper regions of comparative cold. It is the Heat that licks out of the liquid lake the watery elements of the atmosphere. Heat is the mediator between the earthly materials and the atmosphere, just as the mouth is the mediator between the food and the stomach. And the foot is the lowest part of the organisation, symbol of obedience to the throned monarch, the brain. It obeys the motor impulse communicated to it from the brain through the nerves. So does the earth obey the influence of the sun communicated to it through the ethereal channels of space. The eyes in the human organism are constructed to enable man to perceive colours and develop taste. Similarly, the light-beams of the sun, *angirasaḥ* (अंगिरसः) of the mantra, develop the spectral universe, thus standing in the same relation to the universe as the eye stands to the human body. The human lungs are fitted not only to act as the bellows, drawing in and expelling air or to oxygenate blood, but to draw in invisible elements that directly strengthen the brain. So the atmosphere is fitted not only to attract particles of vaporous matter or repel the suspended earthly particles, but to draw out from the earth, especially at the two poles as if at the ventricles, streams of positive and negative electricity that leave the earth forever and for good.

The theory of the Atharva is almost supported by Yajurveda, XXXI. 13 and Mundak, II. i.4.[15] Then is the analogy of the human constitution furnished on the same lines. As I am afraid lest I should copy the whole here, I think I must refer the reader to the original and proceed "to contemplate God in His everlasting designs, in the interior constitution of the universe," which is the second or the contemplative phase. In this phase, "although we do not view God as acting upon universal matter and disposing it of in various shapes, yet we view Him as in a dream, associating particles of matter, aggregating and disposing them in their respective places, till an entirely new design is interiorly contemplated. As if retired from the physical universe, God is viewed as contemplating the design of creation." "From this view of the Divinity," which is represented by U, "the yogi passes to the third phase, *the slumbering phase,*" in which "God is viewed as exercising omnipotence, omniscience and omnificence with the greatest regularity, precision and perfection without the exercise of strained will or brain-elaborated design but by the spontaneous working of the eternal self-intelligent principles and ideas whose embodiment He is." "The fourth, a hyatus, which is no *matra* or letter, *is the true ineffable Name.*" Thus, "to recapitulate, the three *matras* of Om, when duly contemplated and in their respective order, set free the devotee from the troubles of this world. The contemplation of the first *matra* confers upon him the most exalted

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state of existence possible on this earth, that of the second fills him with the joys of the spiritual world, and the contemplation of the last blesses him with *moksha* or immortality."

We have been favoured with the translation of this Upanishad by Archibald Gough, M.A., whose presumption against the sublimity of the philosophy I have quoted at some length in the beginning of this chapter. To show him aright, I will give a few samples of the excellence of this learned gentleman's translation as compared with that of Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi. In the very 1st Mantra the expression *'akshara'* has been translated (by Pandit ji) into 'syllable' instead of "Eternal and Omnipresent," which is the sense given by Patanjali in his Mahabhashya, and which is the interpretation put upon it by Swami Dayanand Saraswati in his Rigvedadi bhashya bhumika, Veda-vishaya-vichar. Then in the same mantra the word सर्वम् (sarvam), which occurs twice, has in both places been translated into 'all,' and thus सर्वमोंकार एव translated into "All is Om, and only Om," while सर्वम् here means 'perfect': reason given in Nirukta Parishishta, 14th Chapter, 13th and 14th Kandas.

Then compare the translation of the 2nd Mantra by Gough, which runs thus:–

"For all this world is Brahman, this Self is Brahman, and this same Self has four quarters."[16] (*Pad*=quarter instead of phase of existence from the root "*pad*" which means *gati*). The same mistakes are repeated in the translation of the 8th Mantra, which has been translated into "this same Self is exhibited ...in letters. The quarters are the letters and the letters are the quarters,–the letter A, the letter U and the letter M,"[17] and so on.

It is with this knowledge of the Sanskrit language that these gentlemen pretend to elevate the sense of the Upanishads by translating them into the English language. Let the future generations judge them by their translations and we are sure of the verdict.

This perhaps the shortest, seems to be one of the most mystic of the Upanishads and nobody can deny that our Pandit has proved himself equal to his task.

## MUNDAKOPANISHAD

*Mundakopanishad* was the third Upanishad, which Panditji took in hand, and of which we possess a complete translation by the same. To our misfortune the exposition could not be written before the noble spark fled to higher regions and we, unfortunate men of this world, left bereft of the light, which might have shown way to "many a forlorn and shipwrecked brother," which might have guided many a totally way-lost rather misled mind on the high road to the temple of Hope, yes, which might have caused the heart of many a noble but misguided soul to throb with aspirations of the highest order.

I proceed to show the excellence and the merit of Panditji's translation by comparing it with others extant. I have compared it with those by Max Müller, Gough, Raja Ram Mohan Rai and Pandit Bhimsen, and I will compare some parts of it with one or two quotations from each. Take the 1st Mantra of this Upanishad

ब्रह्मा देवानां प्रथमः सम्बभूव विश्वस्य कर्त्ता भुवनस्य गोप्ता।
स ब्रह्मविद्यां सर्वविद्याप्रतिष्ठामथर्वाय ज्येष्ठपुत्राय प्राह ॥1 ॥

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Gough translates it as follows:–

"OM. Brahma was the first of the gods that emanated, the maker of the world, the upholder of the spheres. He proclaimed the science of the Self, the basis of all science, to his eldest son, Atharvan."[18]

Now compare it with Raja Ram Mohan Rai's which is as follows:–

"Brahma, the greatest of celestial deities and executive creator and preserver of the world, came into form; he instructed Atharva, his eldest son, in the knowledge respecting the Supreme Being, on which all sciences rest."

Again compare both these with that of Max Müller, which runs thus:–

"Brahma was the first of the Devas, the maker of the universe, the preserver of the world. He told the knowledge of Brahman, the foundation of all knowledge, to his eldest son, Atharva."

I must give Panditji's translation as well, which is as follows:–

"Brahma was the first of literati, who was the master of physical laws of nature, and an adept mechanician. He was the protector of mankind. He taught his eldest son, Atharva, *Brahma Vidya,* or the knowledge of the Deity, which is superior to all other kinds of knowledge."

Thus it is quite apparent that the 1st and the 2nd translations are far from correct. They are, in fact, quite against the sense of the Upanishads, which boldly and clearly preach the formless character of the Deity – See 6th Mantra of this very Upanishad, 1st Khand, which has been understood in almost the same sense by all the above-mentioned four translators, the slight difference being simply a difference of words used, and which declares "that Immortal Being" to be "invisible, incomprehensible, without origin, without symbolical distinction (without caste according to Max Müller and others), without eyes and ears...." Also see the 2nd Mantra of 2nd Mundaka, 1st Khanda, which inculcates that "that Immortal Being is glorious, incorporeal, all-pervading, existing in and out, unborn, without organs of life and of mind, holy, subtler than the all-filling ether, and even than the human soul." How could, then, the Upanishad in the very first Mantra say that Brahma came into form? Thus Mr. Gough and Raja Ram Mohan Rai have quite wrongly translated the word 'Sambabhuva' into 'emanated' and 'came into form;' while Max Müller and Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi quite correctly translated into 'was'. We can perceive the wisdom of Max Müller in keeping the original words 'Devas' and 'Brahman' instead of giving them a wrong sense by putting in 'gods' or 'celestial deities,' for the former and 'self' for the latter. Then we see the vast difference between the meanings attached to the word 'Karta.' Certainly 'executive creator' is a very defective and objectionable translation of '*Karta,*' and preference must be given to 'maker' or the substitute for it adopted by Panditji.

Then again look to the translations of the 8th Mantra which runs thus:–

तपसा चीयते ब्रह्म ततोऽन्नमभिजायते। अन्नात्प्राणो मनः सत्यं लोकाः कर्मसु चामृतम् ॥8 ॥

Now, Gough's and Max Müller's translations of this mantra look very strange. Gough's is as follows:–

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"Brahman begins to swell with fervid self-coercion. Thence the aliment begins to unfold itself, and from that aliment proceed *Prana*, the internal sensory, the elements, the actions of living souls, and then perennial fruits."[19]

*Max Müller* translates this mantra thus:–

"The Brahman swells by means of brooding (penance); hence is produced matter (food), from matter breath, mind, the true, the worlds (seven) and from the works (performed by men in the worlds) the immortal (the eternal effects, rewards and punishments of works)."

Compare both of these with the following by Raja Ram Mohan Rai:–

"From His omniscience the Supreme Being resolves to create the universe. Then nature, *the apparent cause of the world* is produced by him. From her, the prior operating sensitive particle of the world, styled Brahma, the source of the faculties proceeds. *From the faculties* the five elements *are* produced. *Thence spring* the *seven* divisions of the world whereon ceremonial rites with their consequences are brought forth."

I wonder why do Gough and Max Müller insist upon translating *"tapas"* into "coercion" and "brooding," while Max Müller himself, in his footnote on page 28, admits that there is the authority of Parasara Smriti page 39, for this word having two roots, one *"tap"* to burn, the other "*tap*" to meditate. The reader can himself see how elevating are the expressions, *"begins to swell by self-coercion"* and *"swells by means of brooding."*

Yes, it is such like translations which show the texts of the sublime Upanishad to be meaningless jargon in many places. How can Brahma swell by brooding or penance (which latter word Max Müller has been pleased to put in brackets, as if brooding was not sufficient enough to make the expression clumsy enough)? Compare with all these excellent productions the following by Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi:–

"When that Great Being contemplates creation, the universe springs up into material forms, and thence evolve vegetation life, intelligence, truth, birth, good deeds and immortality."

There is a world of difference between the sublimity of the original (as also shown by Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi's translation) and the clumsiness of translations of Messrs. Max Müller and Gough.

In the next Mantra, which is closely connected with the above quoted one another egregious mistake seems to have been committed by these foreign and alien translators of the Upanishads. Their translations show that from "Brahman is born Brahman," whereas really the latter Brahman means the material universe or *brahmand;* else how can God be born? Consistently or inconsistently, reasonably or unreasonably, whether they understand the thing or not, translate it they must, and then say that Upanishads contain much that is "meaningless jargon." God save the Upanishads from such self-opinionated dangerous friends!

Then again, in the translation of the 1st portion of the 1st Mantra of the 2nd Khanda, both the European scholars have displayed their ignorance of the sense of the text. Gough translates it thus:–

"This is the truth: The rites which the sages saw in the Mantras were widely current in the Tretayuga or second age of the world."

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Max Müller's is almost the same except the slight difference in the words used. Now compare it with Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi's version, which runs as follows:–

"It is true that the sages divided the mantras which enjoined the performance of religious works into three Samhitas." This translation tells by itself that it is the more reasonable, more consistent, more logical, better sounding of the two. Even Max Müller recognises the apparent clumsiness of introducing the sense of a *yuga* into the mantra, because, says he in the footnote to this Mantra on page 30, "I should prefer, however, to take *treta* in the sense of *trayi vidya* and *santata* as developed, because the idea that the Treta age was distinguished by its sacrifices seems to me of later origin." Now substitute the sense given in the footnote to that adopted in the translation and you can easily see the difference which the substitution will make.

Raja Ram Mohan Rai translates the passage in his own fashion and quite differently from either of the above; but it certainly does support Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi's version to a great extent. He writes:–

> Those rites the prescription of which wise men *such as Vaishishta and others* found in the Vedas are truly the means of producing good consequences. They have been performed in various manners by three sects among Brahmans, *namely, Udhuryoo* or those who are well-versed in the Yajur Veda, *Oodgata* or the sect who know thoroughly the Sama Veda; and *Hota* or those *Brahmans* that have a perfect knowledge of the Rig Veda.

All this leads us to one and the same conclusion, that Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi's is the best translation extant, in fact, more reasonable, more consistent, and more in keeping with the sense of the subject described therein than that of anybody else.

Even with these defects and common-place mistakes in his translation, Max Müller admits that his translation is not everywhere literal, for he says, "however we have laid ourselves open to another kind of censure also, namely, of having occasionally not been literal enough. It is impossible to argue these questions in general, but every translator knows that in many cases a literal translation may convey an entirely wrong meaning." What wonder then that Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi in his attempt of not sacrificing the sense has in some places departed from the rule of making the translation literal enough to be understood by everybody and anybody. In more than one place does the mystic terminology of the most sublime portions of the Upanishads require a fairly good acquaintance with classical Sanskrit and the canons of its interpretation. European translators have, on the other hand, quite ignored that difficulty. They have everywhere adopted the most ordinary meaning to even the most mystic and the most difficult of these passages, and thus much that is highly invaluable in these Upanishads, has been made to appear as "meaningless jargon" having no sense whatsoever. It was in this sphere that Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi's services were the most required, and it is one of the greatest misfortunes to be so soon and so abruptly deprived of the advantages to be reaped from the learning of so thoughtful a spirit.[20]

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## NOTES AND REFERENCES

* Reproduced from: Lala Lajpat Rai, *Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi: Life and Work* (ed. Ram Prakash, Dr. 2012), Satyarth Prakashan, Kurukshetra, pp. 111-132. The references have been updated by the editor.

1. F. Max Müller, *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XIV. *The Upanishads*, part II, p. xi.
2. A.E. Gough, 1974, *The Philosophy of the Upanishads*, Ess Ess Publications, Delhi, p.2.
3. *Ibid.*, pp.4-5.
4. F. Max Müller, *op. cit.*, p.xii.
5. In this article by Lalaji, the date has been incorrectly printed as 9th. The correct date is 7th See *Works of Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi* (ed. Ram Prakash Dr.), p. viii.
6. Unless otherwise mentioned, all the sentences within quotes in this chapter are from the translation of the Upanishads by Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi as reported in '*Works of Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi*' edited by Ram Prakash Dr., (pp. 68-124).
7. The given translation by Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi, is of the following mantra:
   अग्ने नय सुपथा रायेऽअस्मान्विश्वानि देव वयुनानि विद्वान्। युयोध्यस्मज्जुहुराणमेनो भूयिष्ठां ते नमऽउक्तिं विधेम॥18॥
8. Raja Rammohan Roy is the correct name.
9. This mantra reads as under: अन्धन्तमः प्रविशन्ति येऽविद्यामुपासते। ततो भूय इव ते तमो य उ विद्यायाꣳ रताः ॥
10. F. Max Müller, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, Part I, pp. 319-320.
11. Pandit Bhim Sen Sharma was a disciple of Rishi Dayanand Saraswati. His commentary on Ishopanishad was first published by Veda Prakash Press, Itawa in 1905.
12. This is Maheshvara (*Pratyāhāra*) sutra ञ म ङ ण न म्
    Maharshi Patanjali – the commentator of Ashtadhyayi, maintains that *Shabda,* its meaning and their mutual relationship are eternal. अक्षरं नक्षरं विद्यादश्नोतेर्वा सरोऽक्षरम्। Since the God given meaning of the eternal *Śabda* is eternal, the rishis realize the same meaning in *Samādhi.*
13. F. Max Müller, *Lectures on the Science of Language*, Vol.I, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, p.402.
14. *Atharvaveda*, 10.7.32-34
15. Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi states as under in this connection:
    "To impress the reader with this part, we will present only the analogy of slightly differing pictures of the same from different parts of Vedic literature, so that he may be able to form a somewhat general and comprehensive conception of the organisation of Nature, and not to take the analogy too literally. We quote *Yajur Veda*, XXXI. 13:
    नाभ्याऽआसीदन्तरिक्षꣳ शीर्ष्णो द्यौः समवर्त्तत। पद्भ्यां भूमिर्दिशः श्रोत्रात्तथा लोकां अकल्पयन्॥2॥
    "God has placed the super terrestrial space in the place of the stomach, the sun in the place of the head, the earth in the place of the feet, and the open space in the place of the ear cavity." In Mundaka, II. 1.4, we read– अग्निर्मूर्द्धा चक्षुषी चन्द्रसूर्य्यौ दिशः श्रोत्रे वाग्विवृताश्च वेदाः। वायुः प्राणो हृदयं विश्वमस्य पद्भ्यां पृथिवी ह्येष सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा॥
    "The Eternal Spirit that resides in the interior of all things, has disposed the fire instead of the brain, the sun and the moon in lieu of the two eyes, the open directions of space in lieu of ear cavities, the Vedas as His organs of speech, the atmosphere as His lungs, the whole universe, as His heart, and the planets as his feet. It is thus that He lives." (Ram Prakash, Dr., ed., *Works of Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi*, p.103).
16. A.E. Gough, *op. cit.*, p.69.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 72.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 99.
19. *Ibid.*, p.100.
20. Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi died on March 19, 1890 at the young age of 26 years.

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# CHAPTER 32

# The Upaniṣads: Comparing the Views of Shankara and Dayanand

*Satish Prakash*

The Arya tradition tells us that the four Vedas – *Ṛg, Yajur, Sāma* and *Atharva* – were revealed by God in the beginning of creation. These Vedas contain principal branches of knowledge for the benefit of all mankind. Many scholars posit that the Vedas comprise Samhitās, Brāhmaṇas, Āranyakas and Upaniṣads. In fact, Swami Shankarāchārya declares the Upaniṣads to be the end-portions of the *Vedas*, and labels the Upaniṣads as Vedānta, the end of the Vedas. Rishi Dayanand disagrees with Shankara and says that the knowledge revealed by God to the first four Rishis Agni, Vāyu, Āditya and Aṅgira is contained in the Samhitās only, and that Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas and Upaniṣads were written by the later Rishis expressly to explain the contents of the *Veda Samhitās*.

The age of the Upaniṣads is very difficult to determine. Some historians claim that Upaniṣads do not belong to any particular period of Sanskrit Literature. They posit that the earliest Upaniṣads, such as the Bṛhadāraṇyaka and Chāndogya, date to around the middle of the first millennium B.C., while the latest were composed in the medieval and early modern periods. The Upaniṣads bring to fore the philosophy laid out in the Vedas, and have therefore exerted a great influence on all later books dealing with aspects of Vedic Philosophy like the Smritis, Darśanas, Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābhārata, Bhagavad Gita, and to an extent, even the Purāṇas.

Most Sanskrit scholars posit that the term Upaniṣad is derived from *upa* (nearby), *ni* (at the proper place, down) and *sad* (to sit), and it yields the literal meaning of 'instruction received by sitting down near a teacher'. A second meaning to the verb *sad*, is to destroy, and as the famous Sanskrit Lexicographer, Sir Monier-Williams, notes, the term Upaniṣad can also mean knowledge that destroys passion and ignorance. Other dictionary meanings include, the esoteric doctrine and the secret

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doctrine. Professor Max Müller[1] prefers to interpret Upaniṣad as a session consisting of pupils assembled at a respectful distance around their teacher.

The Muktikopaniṣad (predating 1656) contains a list of 108 Upaniṣads and lists itself as the final one. In 1657, Dara Shikoh, the eldest son of the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan, translated 50 Upaniṣads into Persian. Max Müller (1879) was aware of 170 Upaniṣads. Sadhale, in his massive verse index Upaniṣad-Vākya-Mahā-Koṣa, has identified 223 different texts that call themselves by this name. Additionally, parts of the earlier Brāhmaṇa texts are sometimes considered Upaniṣads. Swami Shankarāchārya composed commentaries in classical Sanskrit on 11 Principal Upaniṣads, those that are generally regarded as the oldest, spanning the late Vedic and Mauryan periods.

Rishi Dayanand Saraswati (1824-1883), concurring with Swami Shankarāchārya, also mentions 11 principal Upaniṣads, each being associated with one of the four Vedas (Ṛgveda, Sāmaveda, Śukla and Kṛṣṇa Yajurveda, Atharvaveda) as follows: Aitareyopaniṣad with Ṛgveda, Īśopaniṣad and Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad with Śukla Yajurveda, Kaṭhopaniṣad, Taittirīyopaniṣad and Śvetāśvataropaniṣad with Kṛṣṇa Yajurveda, Kenopaniṣad and Chāndogyopaniṣad with Sāmaveda and Praśnopaniṣad, Muṇḍakopaniṣad and Māṇḍūkyopaniṣad with Atharvaveda.

***Early Translations and Commentaries***

The spiritually inclined Mughal prince Dara Shikoh completed a Persian translation of the Upaniṣads in 1657. Persian, at that time, was the most widely read language of the East. It was understood by many European scholars, and so, through Shikoh's Persian translations, they came into contact with the Upaniṣads. In 1775, the French scholar Anquetil Duperron (1731-1805) procured the manuscripts of these Persian translations, and used them to translate some of the Upaniṣads into French and Latin. The Latin translations were published in 1801 and 1802. The famous German philosopher, Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860), came across these Latin translations and upon their study, proclaimed for the world "the philosophical value of the Upaniṣads" and "the benefit of the Vedas, the access to which by means of the Upaniṣads" was in his eyes "the greatest privilege" that the still young century (1818) could claim before all previous centuries.[2] From 1832 to 1876, translations of the Upaniṣads in English, German, French and Latin, were written and published by Indian and European scholars like Rammohan Roy, H.T. Colebrooke, K. Windishmann, E. Roer, Rajendralal Mitra, E.B. Cowell, A. Weber, A.E. Gough and P. Regnaud.

***Upaniṣads – Their Themes: Is there only one Existence, That of God?***

Swami Shankarāchārya was an uncompromising advocate of a non-dualistic monistic philosophy called Advaita.[3] He asserted that this philosophy is found in Upaniṣads, along with other texts like the Bhagavad Gita and Brahma Sūtra. According to Shankara's non-dualism, there is only one existence – that of God – and that all plurality in existence in the universe amounts to illusion. Therefore, in this doctrine, there is nothing called a separate individual Soul. It is important, therefore, for us to ask and answer the question if the Upaniṣads do teach the existence of only One

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Existence, One Soul, God. The following verse from the Kaṭhopaniṣad[4] sheds some light:

*Ṛtaṁ pibantau sukṛtasya loke guhāṁ praviṣṭau parame parārdhe.*
*Chāyātapau brahmavido vadanti pañcāgnayo ye ca triṇāciketāḥ.*

This body is the Abode for good deeds to be performed. In this body, there are two Souls engaged in Knowledge (lit. drinking Knowledge). Both Souls are found in the Cave of the Heart described as the Supreme Abode. Rishis, who know the Veda, compare these two Souls to Shade and Sunlight. The same comparison is made by householders who perform the five Great Daily Duties, and by hermits who have kindled 'the Nachiketa Fire' three times in their Life.

The reference is to the Universal Soul, God, and the Individual Soul. God is compared to Light and the individual Soul is compared to Shade. God possesses unlimited knowledge and Light is a reference to that, whereas the Soul possesses limited knowledge and Shade refers to the same. Also, Light and Shade enjoy an inseparable relationship, but importantly, one is not the other – they never become each other and remain fundamentally different. Similarly, God and Soul enjoy an inseparable relationship, but God is not Soul and Soul is not God – they never become each other and are fundamentally different from each other.

The above is one of the verses that Rishi Dayanand would use to vigorously disagree with Swami Shankarāchārya, claiming that the non-dualistic doctrine is inherently flawed and has no basis in the Vedas, Upaniṣads and other authoritative writings. This Kaṭha verse is proof that there are two kinds of Soul, not One. To support his triadistic theory that there are three eternally co-existing entities, God, Soul and Matter, Rishi Dayanand quotes as follows:[5]

*Trayaḥ keśina ṛtuthā vi cakṣate saṁvatsare vapata eka eṣām*
*Viśvameko abhi caṣṭe śacībhirdhrājirekasya dadṛśe na rūpam.*

Three shining substances are perceived as acting according to the Eternal Law. One of them (God) sows the original seed for creation to evolve; another one (Soul) observes the creation through its inherent powers; the power of the third (Primordial Matter) is seen, though its form is not visible.

The *Traitavāda* or the triadistic philosophy of Rishi Dayanand can be summarised in the following Kaṭha verse:[6]

*Ya eṣa supteṣu jāgarti kāmaṁ kāmaṁ puruṣo nirmimāṇaḥ.*
*Tadeva śukraṁ tadbrahma tadevāmṛtamucyate.*
*Tasmimlokāḥ śritāḥ sarve tadu nātyeti kaścan.*

Pervading every atom, this God fashions objects in the universe to fulfil the desires of Souls. He remains awake while Souls are asleep. He shines in purity and is beyond all parameters. He alone is called the Immortal One, free from birth and death. In Him, are contained all cosmic regions. No one can circumvent His laws.

This verse establishes a few important tenets relating to *Traitavāda* or the Triad of God, Soul and the World, as follows:

- God pervades every pore, fibre, atom and molecule of the universe. For this reason, He is called *Puruṣa*.

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- He creates the universe, filled with objects, primarily to fulfil the desires and needs of Souls.
- He is awake in his Super Omniscience, while Individual Souls sleep in the slumber of ignorance and sloth.
- He is ever pure and beyond all dimensions. Nothing circumvents Him. The Soul has dimensions and is circumvented by ignorance.
- Death cannot affect Him. The Soul is caught in the wheel of birth and death.
- All planets, solar systems and galaxies exist in Him.
- People may try, but can never succeed in violating His laws.

This verse rejects Shankara's notion that the universe is a dream-like illusion. The universe is a dynamic reality that exists in God – God pervades the universe, while Souls exist in the universe and in God.

***Is God without Qualities?***

Swami Shankarāchārya further explains that God is Nirguṇa – He is a homogeneous entity that has no qualities, and so, indeterminate. He cannot be defined and cannot be labelled with assignable adjectives that limit Him. The following Kaṭha verse,[7] however, tells us something different:

*Taṁ durdarśaṁ gūḍhamanupraviṣṭaṁ guhāhitaṁ gahvareṣṭhaṁ purāṇaṁ.*
*Adhyātmayogādhigamena devaṁ matvā dhīro harṣaśokau jahāti.*

After restraining his senses from pursuing their respective objects, and stabilising his Mind in the Nature of God, a Yogi knows God, as follows:

- He is 'seen' only after one has undergone austere practices – *Dur-darśa;*
- He is 'hidden' from the physical organs, i.e., He cannot be seen, heard, smelt, tasted and touched by the active senses – *Gūḍha;*
- He has 'entered' into, and pervades, our Soul – *Anu-praviṣṭa;*
- He is 'set' in the Cave of the Intellect – *Guhā'hita;*
- He is present even in the most inaccessible places – *Gahvareṣṭa;*
- He is Eternal, without a beginning, and ever-new – *Purāṇa;*
- He illumines the Sun and other luminous bodies – *Deva.*

Realising God, the wise person renounces joy and sorrow; no longer does he exult because of material gains or sulk because of material losses.

The verse quoted above defines God in at least seven different ways. And since the Knowledge of the Upaniṣads is uniform, this Kaṭha verse finds support from *Īśopaniṣad*[8] which says: God encircles everything of the Universe. He is Radiant. He is without body, without flaw, and without sinews. He is ever Pure, unpierced by evil, far-sighted, Wise, All-surpassing, (and) Self-existent. In an appropriate manner, He has assigned meanings to words, and purposes to objects, for (the benefit of all) His Children living through the ages.

Rishi Dayanand concurs with Upaniṣads by saying in the Second Principle of the Arya Samaj: God is existent, intelligent and blissful. He is formless, omnipotent, just, kind, unborn, endless, unchangeable, beginningless, unequalled, the support of all, the

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lord of all, omnipresent, immanent, unaging, immortal, fearless, eternally holy, and the creator of the universe. He alone should be communed with.

***The Soul – Is it a mere Witness?***

Swami Shankarāchārya says that, by a process of self-alienation, God draws out from Himself the separate individual Souls who inhabit human and animal bodies. Each Soul, in its absolute, real state, is a mere witness, and so, does nothing and consequently enjoys nothing. The Acharya postulates that any *supposed enjoyer-ship* for the Soul is created by mind and intellect which act as limiting adjuncts. Let us examine Shankara's view in the light of the following Kaṭha verses:

*Ātmānaṁ rathinaṁ vid'dhi śarīraṁ rathameva ca.*
*Bud'dhiṁ tu sārathiṁ vid'dhi manaḥ pragrahameva ca.*[9]

Know the body to be a chariot. The Soul sits in the chariot as the master-passenger travelling to its destination. The intellect drives the chariot, while the mind is the rein yoked to the horses.

*Indriyāṇi hayānāhurviṣayānsteṣu gocarān.*
*Ātmendriyamanoyuktaṁ bhoktetyāhurmanīṣiṇaḥ.*[10]

Wise thinkers say that the senses are the horses pulling the chariot, and the sense-objects are the paths on which sense-horses travel. Wise thinkers also say that the Soul enjoys the worldly journey when in union with the senses and mind.

Shankara's understanding ascribes a negative function to intellect. This *Kaṭha* verse says specifically that Soul enjoys the world when in union with the senses, intellect and mind. Explaining the intent of this *Kaṭha* verse, Rishi Dayanand says that the Soul has an inherent ability to enjoy, and needs an instrument with which to enjoy. It enjoys the world through the intellect, mind and senses, and also enjoys God's bliss in the state of emancipation through a spiritual body. Throwing light on the positive function of the intellect, Dayanand quotes the Sanskrit grammarian Rishi Pāṇini who says that the Soul perceives an object through the intellect and inspires a desire in the mind to possess that object – *Ātmā buddhyā sametyārthānmano yuṅkte vivakṣayā.*[11] Even Maharshi Kaṭh, in a verse,[12] assigns a very positive function to intellect by saying that though hidden in all beings, Soul does not make itself manifest to the senses, but can be seen by subtle seers through their sharp and subtle intellect.

Rishi Dayanand would have us understand that it is God, not the Soul, who is a witness. To support this theory, the Rishi would quote Muṇḍakopaniṣad[13] and Ṛgveda[14] *Dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāyā samānaṁ vṛkṣaṁ pariṣasvajāte. Tayoranyaḥ pippalaṁ svādvattyanaśnannanyo abhicākaśīti,* in which God is described as the witness who watches us as we bird-like souls taste sweet and bitter fruits plucked from the Cosmic Tree, while He, the Cosmic Bird remains ever Blissful and does not enjoy any fruits.

***Is the Individual Soul Infinite?***

As stated above, Swami Shankarāchārya posits that the embodied Soul is actually God, and so, the Soul is all-pervading and not atomic in size. Let us examine his statement in the light of the following Kaṭha verse:[15]

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*Asya visramsamānasya śarīrasthasya dehinaḥ.*
*Dehādvimucyamānasya kimatra pariśisyata etadvai tat.*

When the embodied Soul slips away and is released from this body, what then remains in the body?

Using the above and other authorities, Rishi Dayanand vigorously disagrees with Shankara, saying that an all-pervading Soul would not – in fact, cannot – slip away and depart the body, as only something finite in size can do so. In positing that the Soul is of a finite size, Rishi Dayanand quotes Vedānta Darśana[16] which says that the Soul is not infinite in size because scriptures talk of the Soul passing out of the body, going forth and returning – *Ut-krānti-gati-ā-gatīnām.* Also, the Śvetāśvataropaniṣad,[17] states clearly that

*Vālāgraśatabhāgasya, śatadhā kalpitasya ca.*
*Bhāgo jīvaḥ sa vijñeyaḥ, sa cānantyāya kalpate.*

The Individual Soul is to be known as a part of the hundredth part of the point of a hair-strand divided a hundred fold.

***The Universe – Is it a mere Dream-like Illusion?***

Swami Shankarāchārya, like his predecessor Gauḍapāda, argues with tremendous polemical skill that, in view of God being the only existence, the world is unreal and false. Due to ignorance and misrepresentation (*māyā*), human beings see a multiplicity of things and witness change. Shankara claims that phenomena have the appearance of reality for the same reason that things seen in a dream look real. When the dream ends, the appearances end. In the same way, when life and death end and enlightenment dawns, the world of so-called reality disappears. The opening verse of the Īśopaniṣad, however, gives us a different perspective – that the world constitutes dynamic realism. It says:

*Īśāvāsyamidaṁ sarvaṁ yatkiñca jagatyāṁ jagat.*

All of this – whatever moves in this moving universe – is pervaded, occupied and owned by *Īśa*, God.

A close study reveals that the Upaniṣad, in the above verse, teaches us that everything of the universe is filled with movement. Movement points to dynamic realism and such movement inheres even in the tiniest of objects – in atoms and molecules. There is movement also, in the revolving planets and the expanding galaxies. Everything in the universe is movement within movement. Everything exists by movement and is dissolved by a cessation of movement. And, because of movement, everything changes each moment. Nothing is permanent in shape, size, colour or form. So, in every moment that we live on Earth – we see birth, growth, decay and death, and then rebirth – and it is all real because we experience it. In this changing world, there is no steady base on which we can safely erect the structure of life. This Upaniṣad, however, assures us that if we look deeper, we can perceive a changeless Being in the midst of change and a deathless Being in the midst of death. This points to a very positive relationship between the Creator and his creation. This relationship between God and this dynamic universe is imaged in the fact that the universe is dark, inert, useless and unproductive, and in pervading the universe, God energises every atom,

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instilling life, light and motion. He is the changeless substratum that holds together the chain of changing forms. He is the motionless base that regulates, superintends and owns everything. God is real and so indeed is his creation.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. F. Max Müller, 1969, Sacred Book of the East Series, *The Upanishads*, Part 1, Motilal Banarsidas, Delhi, p. lxxxi.
2. F. Max Müller, p. lix
3. The *Advaita* philosophy of Shankarāchārya can be summarized in the following half verse:
   *Brahma satyam jaganmithyā Jīvo brahmaiva nāparaḥ*
   God is real, the world is unreal, and the Soul is no other than God.
   Shankara was uncompromisingly emphatic in declaring the sole reality of the Impersonal Being called Brahman, and the mere illusion of the plurality of phenomenon apparent to us. As said before, through a process of self-alienation, He, the Impersonal Brahman–God, draws out from Himself a Personal God called Īśvara, the separate individual souls present in living bodies, and the varied manifestations of this phenomenal world. All three mentioned above, Shankara says, are unreal.
   For more details, see Rajendra Vidyalankar, *Shankara's Vedānta and Dayanand*, chapter 35, pp. 533-544 (Editor).
4. *Kaṭhopaniṣad*, 1:3:1;
   ऋतं पिबन्तौ सुकृतस्य लोके गुहां प्रविष्टौ परमे परार्धे।
   छायातपौ ब्रह्मविदो वदन्ति पञ्चाग्नयो ये च त्रिणाचिकेताः॥
5. *Ṛgveda*, 1:164:44;
   त्रयः केशिन ऋतुथा वि चक्षते संवत्सरे वपत एक एषाम्।
   विश्वमेको अभि चष्टे शचीभिर्ध्राजिरेकस्य ददृशे न रूपम्॥
6. *Kaṭhopaniṣad*, 2:2:8;
   य एष सुप्तेषु जागर्ति कामं कामं पुरुषो निर्मिमाणः।
   तदेव शुक्रं तद् ब्रह्म तदेवामृतमुच्यते।
   तस्मिँल्लोकाः श्रिताः सर्वे तदु नात्येति कश्चन्।
7. *Ibid.*, 1:2:12;
   तं दुर्दर्शं गूढमनुप्रविष्टं गुहाहितं गह्वरेष्ठं पुराणम्।
   अध्यात्मयोगाधिगमेन देवं मत्वा धीरो हर्षशोकौ जहाति॥
8. *Īśopaniṣad*, mantra 8
9. *Kaṭhopaniṣad*, 1:3:3;
   आत्मानं रथिनं विद्धि शरीरं रथमेव च।
   बुद्धिं तु सारथिं विद्धि मनः प्रग्रहमेव च॥
10. *Ibid.*, 1:3:4;
    इन्द्रियाणि हयानाहुर्विषयांस्तेषु गोचरान्।
    आत्मेन्द्रियमनोयुक्तं भोक्तेत्याहुर्मनीषिणः॥
11. Swami Dayanand, Samvat 1985, *Varṇoccāraṇaśikṣā*, Vedic Yantralaya, Ajmer, shloka 4;
    आत्मा बुद्ध्या समेत्यार्थान्मनो युंक्ते विवक्षया।
12. *Kaṭhopaniṣad*, 1:3:12
13. *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*, 3:1:1;
    द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परिषस्वजाते।
    तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्त्यनश्नन्नन्यो अभिचाकशीति॥
14. *Ṛgveda*, 1:164:20;

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द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परिषस्वजाते।
तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्त्यनश्नन्नन्यो अभिचाकशीति॥

15. *Kaṭhopaniṣad*, 2:2:4;
अस्य विस्रंसमानस्य शरीरस्थस्य देहिनः।
देहाद्विमुच्यमानस्य किमत्र परिशिष्यत एतद्वै तत्॥

16. *Vedānta Darśana*, 2:3:19

17. *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad*, 5:9;
वालाग्रशतभागस्य शतधा कल्पितस्य च।
भागो जीवः स विज्ञेयः स चानन्त्याय कल्पते॥

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# CHAPTER 33

# Ṣaḍdarśana: An Overview

*Swami Jagdishwaranand Saraswati*

Ever since the humans have appeared on this planet, they have grappled with questions pertaining to one's self, origin and purpose as a being. Who am I? Where do I come from, and what is the purpose of life? What is this world? Who created it? How can one be finally liberated from this bondage? How can one attain God? How can happiness be achieved? Such questions have always quizzed the human mind and their answers are to be found in the realm of philosophy. The knowledge about the real nature of things that answers such profound questions has been designated by the Indian seers and thinkers as *darśana*.

Ṣaḍdarśana (the six schools of Vedic philosophy) enjoy an important place in *ārṣa* literature. A brief introduction is as follows:[1]

## NYĀYADARŚANA

Maharshi Gautama is the propounder of *Nyāyadarśana* (*Nyāya* philosophy).[2] It is the first epistemological treatise that offers a systematic deliberation on *tarka* (logic), *pramāṇa* (evidence) and *vāda* etc. The *Nyāyadarśana* has five chapters, each divided into two *āhnikas* (sections), with a total of 538 *sūtras* (aphorisms). The first chapter deals with purpose and characteristic features while the other chapters aim to testify the aforesaid treatise.

### *The Meaning and the Subject-matter of Nyāya*

The term *Nyāya* is used in many ways, but, in philosophy, it designates:

*Nīyateprāpyatevivakṣitārthasiddhiranenaitinyāyaḥ.*[3]

This means that *Nyāya* is the method of proving a hypothesis or of arriving at a definite conclusion or reliable theory.

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The *Nyāya* philosophy may be divided into four parts:

1. Solving issues pertaining to general knowledge.
2. Solving the riddle of the universe.
3. *Jīvātmā* and *mukti* (the soul and its salvation).
4. Realisation of *Paramātmā* (God - the Supreme Soul) and His knowledge.

*Nyāyadarśana* has acknowledged sixteen *padārthas* (elements) to solve the above-mentioned problems. The main appropriated subject of Nyāya is *pramāṇa* (evidence).

***Mukti***

Sixteen *padārthas* (categories) such as *pramāṇa* (evidence), *prameya* (object of valid knowledge) etc., lead to *mukti* (salvation).[4]

*Duḥkhajanmapravṛttidoṣamithyājñānāmuttarottarāpāyetaddanantarāpāyādapavargaḥ*[5]

In the following series – *duḥkha* (suffering), *janma* (birth),[6] *pravṛti* (activity: sinful or righteous), *doṣa* (defect: like, dislike, attachment) and *mithyā-jñāna* (false knowledge) – the cessation of that which follows, annihilates that which precedes it, and this ultimately leads to *mokṣa* (final liberation/salvation).

False knowledge like mistaking the body for the soul leads to defects (likes, dislikes etc.), which lead to actions, which in turn become the cause of birth – the source of sorrows. Thus, runs the worldly cycle. Therefore, by destroying the false knowledge, one can free oneself of sorrows. The ultimate elimination of sorrows is nothing but salvation.

***Īśvara***

*Nyāya* is a theistic philosophy. The *Nyāyika* (followers of the school) believe *īśvara* (God)[7] to be the controller of the world and giver of *karmaphala* (fruits of actions or deeds). The *Nyāya* philosophy enumerates the following methods for the realisation of God:

1. All created objects are made up of parts or ingredients. Therefore, there has to be a conscious creator of all the created objects.
2. There has to be a conscious entity to award fruits of actions to all human beings.
3. The Vedas are the embodiment of true knowledge and are not human creations. *Īśvara* (God) is the creator of the Vedas.
4. God can be realised inwardly through a pure self, and not through exterior means or senses.

## VAIŚEṢIKADARŚANA

The *Vaiśeṣikadarśana* (Vaiśeṣika philosophy) was compiled by Maharshi Kaṇāda[8] who was so named, owing to his practice of collecting *kaṇa* (food grains) from the farms for sustenance. The treatise has ten chapters, each divided into two *āhnikas* (sections), with 370 *sūtras* (aphorisms) in total.

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***The Meaning and the Subject-matter of Vaiśeṣika***

Maharshi Kaṇāda expounds the objective at the very beginning of the text as the attainment of *niḥśreyasa* or *mokṣa* (ultimate liberation). *Vaiśeṣika* is defined as:

*Viśeṣaṁ padārthamadhikṛtyakṛtaṁ śāstraṁ vaiśeṣikam.*[9]

*Viśeṣa* refers to specific minute physical elements like *pṛthvi,* etc. The *Vaiśeṣika* philosophy derives its name owing to its elucidation of the subject taking *viśeṣa* as the basic thing.

***The Essence of Vaiśeṣika***

*Vaiśeṣika* may be summarised as follows:

1. There are six *padārthas* (entities): *dravya* (substance), *guṇa* (quality or attribute), *karma* (action), *sāmānya* (common), *viśeṣa* (specificity) and *samavāya* (inherent or inseparable relation).
2. Nine *dravyas* (substances): *pṛthvi* (earth), *jala* (water), *tejas* (fire), *vāyu* (air), *ākāśa* (ether), *kāla* (time), *diśā* (space), *ātmā* (soul – human and Divine) and *mana* (mind).
3. Twenty-four *guṇas* (qualities): *sparśa* (touch), *rasa* (taste), *rūpa* (form), *gandha* (smell), *śabda* (sound), *saṇkhyā* (number), *vibhāga* (disjunction), *saṇyoga* (conjunction), *parimāṇa* (size/dimension/quantity), *pārthakya* (individuality), *paratva* (priority), *aparatva* (posteriority), *buddhi* (intellect, comprehension or prudence), *sukha* (pleasure), *duḥkha* (pain), *icchā* (desire), *dveṣa* (aversion), *dharma* (merit), *adharma* (demerit), *prayatna* (effort), *saṇskāra* (faculty), *sneha* (viscidity), *gurutva* (heaviness), *dravatva* (fluidity).
4. Five types of *karmas* (actions): *utkṣepaṇa* (rising /upward movement), *avakṣepaṇa* (falling / downward movement), *ākuncana* (contraction), *prasāraṇa* (expansion) and *gamana* (to-and-fro movement / locomotion).
5. *Sāmānya* (generality) is of two types: *sattāsāmānya* (being is the higher level of generality) and *dravyatvādi* (limited number of things and material, not everything)
6. *Viśeṣa* (specificity): *Viśeṣa* is a name assigned to a state which enables to perceive substances different from the other.
7. *Samavāya* (inherence): *Samavāya* is the inbuilt relation existing between two substances as fragrance is to the rose and humanity to humans.

***The Basic Principles of Vaiśeṣika***

The basic principles of the *Vaiśeṣika* philosophy, are as follows:

1. *Paramāṇuvāda* (atomic theory): *paramāṇu* (the minutest particle) as the core material cause of creation. It opines the creation of various objects by the numerous combinations of various *paramāṇus.*
2. *Anekātmavāda* (multiplicity): It believes in the existence of numerous *ātmās* (souls) which assume multiple life forms owing to their *karmaphala.*
3. *Asatkāryavāda*: Cause leads to effect, which is always impermanent or transient.

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4. *Paramāṇunityatāvāda*: The minutest particles are eternal and elemental – therefore indestructible.
5. *Sṛṣṭivāda*: Since effect is the result of a cause, creation is the effect of its creator, God.
6. *Mokṣavāda*: the ultimate goal of every soul is to attain liberation from the cycle of life and death.

## SĀMKHYADARŚANA

The philosophy of Sāmkhya is ascribed to Maharshi Kapila.[10] This treatise has six chapters and 451 sūtras. However, the extrapolated sūtras increases the number to 527.

### *The Meaning and the Subject-matter of Sāmkhya*

The main objective of this philosophy is to deliberate upon the dualistic reality of *prakṛti* (matter) and *puruṣa* (conscious entities).

The word *Sāmkhya* means 'reckon, count, enumerate, calculate, deliberate, reason, reasoning by numeric enumeration, relating to number, rational. The meaning of *Sāmkhya* is usually taken as, empirical or the one related to *sānkhyā* or numbers. But the real and the most beautiful meaning of the word is *vivek-jñāna* i.e., rational knowledge. The word *Sāmkhya* is formed of the root चक्षिङ्:–ख्याञ् with *sam* which means *samyakakhyānam,* i.e., right thought, rational approach or discriminating intellect. Rational thinking empowers one to know that *ātmā* (soul, self)[11] and *Paramātmā* (Supreme Soul) are distinct from *prakṛti* (basic primordial matter),[12] and thus attain *mokṣa* (ultimate liberation).

### *Was Kapila an Atheist?*

Kapila has often been categorised as an atheist. This is based on the sutra *Īśvarāsiddheḥ* where he states that evidence through perception by the senses is not applicable to prove God's existence, and God is not the material cause of the universe. However, the aphorism, *Sa hi sarvavitsarvakartā*[13] affirms Kapila as a theist.

### *The Basic Principles of Sāmkhya*

As per *Sāmkhyaśāstra* there are four basic elements:
1. *Prakṛti* (basic primordial matter), 2. *Prakṛti-Vikṛti,*[14] *ubhayātmaka,*[15] 3. Only *vikṛti*[16] (distortion) and 4. *Anubhayātmaka*[17] – distinct from *prakṛti* and *vikṛti.*

Sāmkhya mentions twenty-five *tattvas.*[18] These are – *prakṛti* (nature), *mahattattva* (the great one or the intellect), *ahaṇkāra* (ego), *pancatanmātrāyeṁ* (five fine elements), *ekādaśaindriyās* (eleven organs of sense and action, including the mind), *pancamahābhūta* (five gross elements) and *puruṣa* (soul and God).

A prominent principle of *Sāmkhya* is *satkāryavāda* (pre-existence of the effect in the cause), which suggests that whatever exists in this world, exists eternally and whatever is non-existent can never be made to exist. It has two forms – Pariṇāmavāda[19] and Vivartavāda.[20]

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The amalgamation of three *guṇas* (qualities): *sattva* (illuminating), *rajas* (of passion) and *tamasa* (of darkness) forms the *prakṛti* (basic primordial matter) which in agreement with *puruṣa* (in this context – God), leads to creation.

It can be affirmed that the amalgamation of *prakṛti* (basic primordial matter) and *puruṣa* (in this context – individual soul) is like coming together of a lame and a blind, who with each other's aid find their way. *Prakṛti* is the object to be enjoyed or experienced, while the soul is the enjoyer. The two, being mutually connected, their coming together fulfils the object of creation.

***Mokṣa***

*Sāmkhya* regards *mokṣa* (salvation) as the complete release from the three types of suffering (i) *ādhyātmika* – caused by physical, emotional and /or mental ailments arising from one's own self, (ii) *ādhibhautika* – caused to one by living violent elements in the Cosmos, and (iii) *ādhidaivika* – caused by forces beyond one's control, natural forces like fire, rain, earthquake, etc.

*Mokṣa* or *mukti* is again of two types *Jīvanmukti* (liberation from the bondage of body) and *videhamukti* (liberation from the cycle of life and death).

Sāmkhya states that *mukti* can be attained by the following means:

1. True knowledge of *prakṛti*.
2. *Dhyāna* (concentration): *dhyāna* is only possible in complete detachment.
3. Fulfilment of one's duty and selfless actions.
4. Constant practice and complete cessation of worldly desire and attachment.

## YOGADARŚANA

The *Yogadarśana* (philosophy of Yoga) is the compilation by Maharshi Patanjali.[21] Though smaller in comparison to the other philosophical systems, it is considered the most important. It has four parts with a total of 194 sūtras.

The term *yoga* means to unite (*yujir yoge*, युजिर् योगे) and to meet (*yujasamadhau*, योग समाधौ), and is interpreted in both ways, in the *Yogadarśana*.

***The Four Units of Yogaśāstra***

Like the four units of medical science (i) *roga* (illness), (ii) *rogahetu* (causes of illness), (iii) *ārogya* (health), and (iv) *auṣadha* (medicine), the Yogaśāstra also elaborates on four units (i) *samsāra* (the world or the life), (ii) *samsāra-hetu* (the cause of the world), (iii) *mokṣa* (salvation) and (iv) *mokṣopāya* (the means of salvation). The world, created by the association with *prakṛti* (the basic primordial matter), is full of sorrow and is to be renounced; and liberation from it leads to *mokṣa* or liberation, which can be achieved by *samyagdarśana* – the right knowledge.

***The Eight-fold Path of Yoga***

To rid oneself of suffering and achieve a focused state of mind, one needs to follow the eight limbs of *yoga*:

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***Yama (Social Discipline)***

*Yama,* the elements of abstinence or restraint, are five in number – *ahimsā* (non-violence), *satya* (truthfulness), *asteya* (non-stealing), *brahmacharya* (celibacy, preservation of vital life force) and *aparigraha* (non-covetousness).

***Niyama (Personal Discipline)***

*Niyamas,* personal discipline, are five in number – *sauca* (external and internal cleanliness), *santoṣa* (contentment), *tapaḥ* (austerity/penance), *svādhyāya* (study of Vedic literature and self-study) and *īśvarapraṇidhāna* (surrender or devotion to God).

***Āsanas (Body Postures)***

*Āsana* is a sitting posture, conducive to steadiness and ease in which the practitioner can practice meditation. Various *āsanas* include *siddha* (the siddhi pose), *padma* (the lotus pose), *sukha* (the easy pose), *svastika* (the auspicious pose) etc.

***Prāṇāyāma (the control of prāṇa or energy)***

*Prāṇāyāma* is the control of prāṇa (energy) and the breath-regulation consisting of the temporary stopping of the process of inhalation and exhalation.

***Pratyāhāra (Control of the Senses)***

*Pratyāhāra* is the inward withdrawal of the senses from the respective external objects of engagement and pleasure.

***Dhāraṇā (Concentration)***

*Dhāraṇā* is the fixing of the mind at one place such as on the forehead, heart, navel, the tip of the nose or the tip of the tongue etc.

***Dhyāna (Meditation or Contemplation)***

*Dhyāna* (meditation) is the flow of sustained contemplation of a singular entity at a locus. In meditation, the practitioner is aware of the separate existence of meditation, the object of meditation and the meditator (self). In other words, (i) the mind of contemplator (*dhyātā*), (ii) the act of contemplation (*dhyān*) and (iii) the object of contemplation (*dhyeya*) – all three, remain distinct.

***Samādhi (Communion with the Divine)***

*Samādhi* or communion is the state, wherein meditation, transcends as it were, its own character and is manifested in the very object being meditated upon. During *samādhi,* the meditator is so absorbed in the object of contemplation that he becomes completely oblivious of his own individuality.

The *Yogadarśana* defines *Īśvara* (God) as a special entity - *puruṣa,* an Extraordinary Spirit unaffected by afflictions, actions, their fruition and the resultant dispositions or desires. His main name is OM. Meditation /contemplation on its meaning leads to self-realisation and the destruction of all obstacles.

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## MĪMĀNSĀDARŚANA

The Mīmānsā philosophy was compiled by Maharshi Jaimini.[22] It is a voluminous philosophical text with twelve chapters, sixty sections and 2731 sūtras. It thus outweighs the other five philosophies in its structural magnitude.

### *The Meaning and the Subject-matter of Mīmānsā*

Mīmānsā refers to 'reflection' or 'critical investigation'. The *Mīmānsādarśana* focuses on the nature of *dharma*, based on the study of the Vedas, the supreme authority on the subject. It contains philosophical deliberations upon *yajñas*.

The Mīmānsā philosophy has three main components: (i) *Jñānoplabdhi* (acquisition of knowledge), (ii) *Adhyātmavada* (deliberation on spirituality), and (iii) *Kartavyākartavyanirṇaya* (critical study of Do's and Don'ts).

Mīmānsā states that the various means of attaining knowledge are – (1) *pratyakṣa* (perception), (2) *anumāna* (inference), (3) *upamāna* (comparison and analogy), (4) *śabda* (relying on the teaching of the scriptures), testimony of reliable experts, past or present (5) *arthāpatti* (postulation, derivation from circumstances), and (6) *anupalabdhi* (non-perception, negative/cognitive proof).

In the domain of *Adhyātmavāda* or spirituality, *Mīmānsā* regards the world neither as an illusion like the neo-Vedāntists, nor transitory like the Buddhists, and affirms its reality. It regards the soul as beginningless and eternal. Unlike the body, the soul does not perish, but acquires a new form, as per the fruits of its actions or deeds. Each and every living entity has an individual soul. The soul gets into bondage and can attain liberation.

Regarding *Kartavyākartavyanirṇaya* or the decision regarding the do's and the don'ts, *Mīmānsā* upholds the Vedas as the ultimate guide, as impersonal, eternal and revealed knowledge, devoid of any shortcoming or incompleteness. Therefore, it is one's duty to abide by the dictates of the Vedas, even if it does not lead to our desired worldly results or causes some suffering.

The ultimate goal of *Mīmānsā* is to attain *Svarga* (state of bliss) which is possible through *niṣkāma karma* (actions and deeds without the expectation of worldly rewards) and *ātmika Jñāna* (spiritual knowledge). These render past actions ineffective and lead to *Mukti* (salvation), liberation from suffering and enjoyment of pure bliss.

There exists a misconception that *Mīmānsā* endorses animal sacrifices in the practice of *yajña*. However, the reference is to the donation of animals and not their sacrifice. It is to be noted that the Vedas, the basis of *Mīmānsā* philosophy, prohibit the consumption of meat and the killing of animals. Maharshi Jaimini could not have endorsed beliefs contrary to the teachings of the Vedas!

## VEDĀNTADARŚANA

Maharshi Vyāsa propounded the Vedānta philosophy.[23] This text has four chapters, each divided into four *pādas* (sections) with a total of 555 sūtras. The chief aim of

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Vedānta philosophy is to describe the Supreme Being, God. His realisation leads to peace and supreme bliss, liberation.

The term Vedānta is based on *Vedasyaantaḥ, antimo bhāga iti vedāntaḥ*[24] - which means – the final portion of the Vedas. The Upaniṣads elucidate the highest knowledge of the Vedas. Therefore, the Vedānta philosophy is considered to be the crown-jewel of the Indian philosophy. The *Vedāntadarśana* was created in order to explain the wisdom of the Upaniṣads. It elucidates the three subjects: *Brahma* (God), *jīva* (souls) and *prakṛti* (the basic primordial matter) and their correlation.

***The Nature and Characteristics of Brahma***

We can realise Brahma in three ways:

1. *Brahma's shuddh svarupa* or His pure form is described with the use of *"neti-neti"* – 'not this, not this'. This method of negation indicates that He is neither heavy nor thin; neither short nor tall etc. He does not assume physical forms.
2. His forceful entity can be conceived, by beholding His creation and His all-pervading nature, just like fire in a cinder.
3. Brahma is fundamentally distinct from the gross elements like *Pṛthivi* (earth) etc., despite His presence in all these created insentient objects. The latter do not know of Him, but can be imagined as His body. He is the innermost eternal spirit. God can be perceived this way too.

***The Nature and Characteristics of Jīva***

*Vedānta* states that both *prakṛti* and *jīva* are dependent upon *Brahma* (God). The *Vedānta* believes that *jīva* (soul) is eternal, i.e., is neither born nor dies. *Jīva* is infinitesimally small, because it leaves the body and enters into the next life. Leaving a body and entering the next life is possible only when the soul is of a very minute size, and not *vibhu*, all-pervading. *Jīvātamā* (soul) does not remain passive or dormant, but it is active. It sees, listens, understands and acts.

***Prakṛti***

It is also referred to as '*māyā*'. However, *Prakṛti*, the material cause of creation, is not illusionary, and has its own existence.

Various commentators have tried to prove a range of hypotheses through their interpretations of the *Vedānta*. Shankarāchārya considers the world as an illusion and *jīva* and *Brahma* as one. This belief is erroneous. Dr. Radhakrishnan opines, "The world is not an illusion or a dream-like structure but a real positive something."[25]

Disregarding the notion of *jīva* and *Brahma* as one, Maharshi Dayanand rightly states, "If *jīva* is *Brahma*, the creator of the limitless Universe, why can't it create even a fly or mosquito? The belief in the un-reality of the world and the oneness of soul and God, therefore, is incorrect."[26]

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## THE AGE OF PHILOSOPHIES

It is difficult to affirm the age of the original compilation of the six systems of Vedic philosophy. The philosophers themselves provide us with no evidence or hints.[27] But, these were certainly created by the rishis, whose period remains unbroken till the Mahābhārata, and these treatises were written prior to and around the Mahābhārata period. Therefore, these can be dated back to around five thousand years from now. The dates allotted by the western writers are misleading and irrational.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Reproduced from Swami Jagdishwaranand Saraswati, 2004, *Ṣaḍdarśnam*, Vijaykumar Govindram Hasanand, Delhi, p. v.
2. *Ibid.* , p. 2
3. नीयते प्राप्यते विवक्षितार्थसिद्धिरनेन इति न्यायः।
4. Swami Dayanand mentions in *Svamantavyāmantavyaprakāśa*:
   12. *Mukti* (emancipation) is the release from all sorts of pain, an unrestricted movement in all-pervading God and His universe. The enjoyment of the bliss of salvation is limited to a fixed period of time. The released soul has again to come into the universe at the expiry of that period. "
   13. The means of salvation are God's communion, i. e. practice of yoga, righteous living, acquisition of knowledge with brahmacarya (sexual purity): the association with men of learning, true knowledge, right thinking, and labour. "
5. *Nyāyasūtra*, 1. 1. 2; दुःखजन्मप्रवृत्तिदोषमिथ्याज्ञानानामुत्तरोत्तरापायेतदनन्तरापायादपवर्गः।
6. Says Dayanand, *op. cit.* "44. Birth is the coming of the soul into a corporeal body. It is of three kinds, previous birth, present birth and the next birth. "
   "45. Birth is the conjunction of the soul with the body and death, their disjunction."
7. Swami Dayanand mentions in *Svamantavyāmantavyaprakāśa*:
   "1. God. His names are Brahma, Paramātman etc. Existence, consciousness and bliss are His characteristics. His attributes, activities and nature are holy. He is omniscient, incorporeal, all-pervading, uncreated, infinite, omnipotent, merciful, just, creator, maintainer and dissolver of the whole universe, the fruit-giver of the actions of all the souls with strict justice. This is my conception of God. "
8. Swami Jagdishwaranand Saraswati, *op. cit.* , p. 52
9. विशेषं पदार्थमधिकृत्य कृतं शास्त्रं वैशेषिकम्।
10. Swami Jagdishwaranand Saraswati, *op. cit.* , p. 92
11. According to Swami Dayanand:
    "4. The soul is a finite and eternal entity (uncreated and immortal) whose attributes are desire, aversion, pleasure, knowledge (consciousness) etc. "
    "5. The soul and God are distinct in their nature and characteristics. But they are one through the relation of pervasion and similarity. Just as corporeal substance was never separable, nor is separable, nor shall be ever separable from ether; and yet it never was, nor is, nor shall be identical with it; similarly God is the pervader, the soul the pervaded; God the worshipable, the soul the worshipper: God the Father, the soul the son etc."
12. "There are three beginningless (uncreated) entities – God, the souls, and *prakṛti* i.e. materia radica (or the material-cause of the universe). They are three eternals. The attributes, functions and nature of the eternals are also eternal, " says Dayanand Saraswati, *op. cit.*
13. स हि सर्ववित् सर्वकर्ता

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14. *Prakṛti-Vikṛti*: (=The cosmos). The cosmos comes into being only when there is in it *vikṛti* (=a move to create something *viśeṣa,* something particular), which means when the composition of the primordial matter carrying in equal measure its three constituents is re-arranged as per God's scheme for shaping various commodities, articles, gases, liquids, etc. , resulting into the creation of the cosmos.
15. *Prakṛti-Vikṛti* (*Ubhayātmaka*): 17 elements out of 25 in this cosmos i. e. excepting God, primordial matter, souls and the solid forms of five *tanmātrās* (fire, air, earth, water and space) are both *prakṛti* and *vikṛti*, and so *ubhayātmaka* (=double-featured). They are *vikṛti* because they have been created out of some material cause–some already existing element. But as *vikṛti* when they serve as the material cause for any resultant element they become *prakṛti*. For example, *mahattattva* (=intellect) is *Vikṛti*, but as the material cause of *ahaṅkāra* (=ego) it serves as *prakṛti*. Again, *ahaṅkāra* which is the *vikṛti* evolving from *mahattattva* serves as the *prakṛti* generating five senses of knowledge and five organs of action, etc.
16. Only *Vikṛti*: The solid forms of five *tanmātrās,* (=elements in their subtle form) called fire, air, earth, water and space are such elements as are not the material cause of any other element. No element is born of them. This means that whereas they are the result of some material cause they themselves are not the material cause of any other element (as *mahattattva* is the material cause of *ahaṅkāra*; and so on). Hence fire, air, earth, water and space as elements belong to the category of *kevalavikṛti* (=only the result of some material cause, and never the material cause of any other element).
17. *Anubhayātmaka* – Distinct from both *prakṛti* and *vikṛti*: The two, viz. God and the conscious element usually referred to as soul are neither *prakṛti* (the material cause of anything, whatsoever) nor *vikṛti* (as they are not born of any material cause). They are *anubhayātmaka* (= single-featured).
18. The bare word 'tattva' (without any qualifier) used in Indian philosophical treatises usually stands for the primordial matter in its unmanifest and subtle form which is believed to be the material cause of the cosmos.
19. *Tattva-Pariṇāmavada*: (=Resultant creation/Areal transformation of the cause) It is one of the two beliefs regarding the coming into the existence of the cosmos. According to this belief the *sāmya-avasthā* (=being in equal measure) of the three constituents of *prakṛti* (=the basic primordial matter), is rearranged by being made unequal as per particular requirements resulting into the creation of the various things in the cosmos.
20. *Vivartavāda*: (=Illusory concept) It is the other of the two beliefs (which is the main tenet of the new (*navīn*) Vedānta philosophy believing in the existence of only one entity, i. e. , God). According to this belief the seeming cosmos, in fact, does not exist and is merely an illusion, a falsity.
21. Swami Jagdishwaranand Saraswati, *op. cit.* , p. 144
22. *Ibid.* , p. 166
23. *Ibid.* , p. 422
24. वेदस्य अन्तः, अन्तिमो भाग इति वेदान्तः।
25. S. Radhakrishanan, 1989, *Indian Philosophy*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi.
26. Maharshi Dayanand, *Vedāntidhvāntanivārana*, Tr. Bawa Arjun Singh, 1899, Vedic Press, Ajmer, p. 35.
27. Swami Jagdishwaranand Saraswati, *op. cit.* , p. xvi

(Translated from Hindi to English by Mrs. Jyoti Laxmi Kashyap and Bhavesh Merja)

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# CHAPTER 34

# The Unanimity in Ṣaḍdarśanas

*Swami Jagdishwaranand Saraswati*

Etymologically *darśana* (philosophy) means, *dṛśyate'nena iti darśanam*[1]- that with which, one can see. The objective of philosophy is to scrutinise the fundamental truth pertaining to the reality of things, whether devoid of intelligence (*Jaḍha*) or conscious (*Cetana*); to address questions such as, our role in this world and what makes one's life noble, beautiful and happy; and above all, to satisfy our deep curiosity pertaining to our own existence as well as offering ways to the attainment of *Paramātmā* (Supreme Spirit God).

Kautilya, the author of *Arthaśāstra* states:

*Pradīpaḥ sarvavidyānāmupāyaḥ sarvakarmaṇām.*
*Āśrayaḥ sarvadharmāṇāṁ śaśvadānvīkṣakī matā.*[2]

The scholarship of investigation is the light that illuminates all the other scholarships/ knowledge, the means to the attainment of every goal and the eternal resort of all *dharma.*

## INDIAN PHILOSOPHY AND ITS SCHOOLS

The western thinkers interpret *darśana* as *philosophy* formed of two Greek words, *philos* meaning love and *sophy* meaning science or learning. Philosophy thus, is the love for knowledge. Initially, science too formed a part of philosophy, which today stands separated on account of its purpose.

*Ātmā* (soul) has ever been the subject of Indian philosophy. Upaniṣadas boldly declare, *ātmā vā are darṣṭvyaḥ* that only soul is worth realising, knowing and worth visitation. *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* narrates an interesting interaction between the

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outstanding philosopher, Yājñāvalkya and one of his wives, Maitreyī. When he decided to enter *sannyāsa*, renouncing the life of a householder, he said to Maitreyī, "Come, let me equally divide my wealth between you and Kātyāyanī as I do not wish to remain a householder anymore, and wish to seek the eternal." At his words, the erudite Maitreyī asked Yājñāvalkya, "Would I attain immortality after acquiring all the wealth of the world?" (*Kathaṁ tenāmṛtā syāma.*[3]) Maharshi replied, "As a resourceful person is able to lead a happy and prosperous life, so shall you, but there lies no immortality in wealth and prosperity." (*amṛtatvasya tu nā''śāsti vitteneti*[4]) She further enquired, "Of what use is the wealth, which shall not grant me immortality?" (*Yenāhaṁ nāmṛtā syāṁ kimahaṁ tena kuryām.*[5]) Maitreyī's questions led to a profound spiritual sermon by Yājñāvalkya that has an illustrious place in the history of Indian religion and philosophy. He said:

> It is not for the sake of the husband, my dear, that he is loved, but for one's own sake is he loved. It is not for the sake of the wife, my dear, that she is loved, but for one's own sake is she loved. It is not for the sake of the sons, my dear, that they are loved, but for one's own sake are they loved. It is not for the sake of wealth, my dear, that it is loved, but fort one's own sake is it loved... It is not for their sake, my dear, that all worldly objects are loved, but for one's own sake are they loved. The Self (or the soul) is therefore, the dearest thing in the world.
> The Self, my dear Maitreyī, should be realised - should be heard of, reflected and meditated upon. By the realisation of the Self, my dear, through hearing, reflection and meditation, all this is known...
> *ātmā vā are drasṭavyaḥ śrotavyo mantavyo nididhyāsitavyo maitreyātmano vā are darśanena śravaṇena matyā vijñānenedaṁ sarvam viditam.*[6]

There are two schools of Indian philosophy namely, *Āstika* (theist) and *Nāstika* (atheist). Chārvāka, Buddhism and Jainism are three *Nāstika* (atheist) schools of philosophy, whereas the six *Āstika* (theist) schools are *Nyāya* (the school of logic), *Vaiśeṣika* (the atomist school), *Sāmkhya* (the enumeration school), *Yoga* (the school of Patañjali which assumes the metaphysics of Sāmkhya), *Mīmāṇsā* (the tradition of Vedic exegesis), and *Vedānta* or *pūrva Uttara Mīmāṇsā*, the *Upaniṣadic* tradition.[7]

Some scholars believe that the six *Āstika* (theist) schools have deep philosophical contradictions with one another. This however, is untrue. Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati states in this regard:

> As in the case of one science, its different branches are treated of separately, so are the six branches of the *Science of Creation* treated of separately in the six *Śāstras*. You can never call it a contradiction, can you? Just as six different causes take part in the formation of a vessel, viz., application, time, clay, intellect, labour (required for mixing or separating different materials), the properties of matter, and the potter, similarly six different causes of the world have been discussed by the six *Śāstras*, thus *application* by the *Mīmāṇsā*, *time* by the *Vaśeṣika*, *material cause* by the *Nyāya*, *divine activity* by the *Yoga*, *atoms and the gradual formation of the different substances* of the world out of them by the *Sāmkhya* and the

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efficient cause (the creator) *God* by the *Vedānta.* Therein lies no contradiction. Just as in Medical Science, the six different branches, Pathology, Medicine and Therapeutics, Materia Medica, Hygiene and Surgery, are treated separately, but all aim at curing disease, likewise six different causes have operated in the formation of this world; one cause having been discussed by each *Śāstra* - there is no contradiction among them.[8]

Rishi further elaborates in the chapter pertaining to *sṛṣṭi* (creation):

Opposition is defined as a contradiction in an approach, which does not appear in the six schools of philosophy, as each has its apparent consistent point of view towards *sṛṣṭi* (creation), thereby making each school of philosophy distinct and unique. *Mīmāṇsā* says "Nothing in this world can be produced without proper *activity.*" The *Vaiśeṣika* says, "Nothing can be done or made without the expenditure of *time.*" The *Nyāya* says, "Nothing can be produced without the *material cause.*" The *Yoga* says, "Nothing can be made without the requisite *skill, knowledge and thought.*" The *Sāmkhya* says, "Nothing can be made without the *definite combination of atoms.*" The *Vedānta* says, "Nothing can be made without a *Maker.*" This shows that the Creation of the world requires six different causes which have been described separately, one by each *Śāstra.* There is no contradiction in these descriptions. The six *Śāstrās* together, serve to explain the phenomenon of Creation in the same way as six men would help one another thatch a roof. A man took six men – five of them blind and the sixth possessed of dim sight - and showed them each a different part of the body of an elephant, and then asked them what they thought the animal was like. The first one answered '*like a pillar*', the second '*like a fan*', the third '*like a big pestle*', the fourth '*like a broomstick*', the fifth '*like something flat*', and the sixth one said '*something dark like four pillars supporting the body of a buffalo*'. Similar to these six men is the condition of those who, instead of studying the books of *rishis* - the true seers of nature - read the current *Sanskrit* or vernacular books written by narrow-minded men of limited understanding, who malign each other and wrangle over trivia.[9]

There cannot be any contradiction among the *Darśanas,* since they all are *Vedāṅgas* (the limbs of Vedas or the tools for their explanation). Let us examine the stand of the various *darśanas* on a few important topics:

## ĪŚVARA (GOD)

*Vedānta Darśana* is brimmed with the thought of Brahma. It states: *Janmādyasya yataḥ.*[10]

Brahma is the creator, preserver and destroyer of this world.

Some scholars believe *Nyāya Darśana* to be devoid of the description of *Paramātmā* (Supreme God). The following quote dispels this myth:

*Īśvaraḥ kāraṇaṁ puruṣakarmāphalyadarśanāt.*[11]

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It can be drawn on the evidence of disparity between man's *karma* (deeds) and *phala* (fruits of action) that God is the causative factor of creation and the giver of the fruits of deeds.

*Vaiśeṣika Darśana* too, acknowledges Brahma:

*Tadvacanādāmnāyasya prāmāṇyam.*[12]

Veda bears its authenticity owing to it being the eternal and flawless speech of God.

*Īśvarapraṇidhānādvā.*[13]

One attains the state of trance immediately by total surrender to God.

Some believe that Kapilācārya, the author of *Sāmkhya*, was an atheist, which is absolutely untrue. He states about *Īśvara*:

*Sa hi sarvavit sarvakartā.*[14]

God is both omniscient and the creator of the universe.

*Īdṛśeśvarasiddhiḥ siddhā.*[15]

The canon profoundly elaborates upon the accomplishment of God.

The belief of some of the commentators that Mīmāṇsā refutes God is also inappropriate, as can be seen from:

*Devatāśraye ca*[16]

One can attain realisation of all the philosophies seeking His resort.

All the philosophers strongly affirm the power and authority of God, who is formless, omniscient, omnipresent, seer and witness of all and administrator of justice.

## JĪVĀTMĀ (SOUL)

All the six *darśanas* believe *jīvātmā* (soul) to be eternal, limited in knowledge, infinitesimally small, and subject to the God's administration of justice. *Vedānta Darśana* describes both *jīva* and *brahma* as distinct and not one and the same.

*Ānandamayo'bhyāsāt.*[17]

The constant worship of God, leads the soul to eternal bliss.

The given *sūtra* affirms the dissimilarity between the *jīva* (soul) and *brahma*. The *darśana* refers to the authority of Vedas on the subject:

*Bhedvyapadeśācca.*[18]

Vedas too emphasise upon the dissimilarity between the *jīvātmā* (soul) and *paramātmā* (Supreme Soul, God).

*Vedānta*, on the basis of the *Śruti* (the Veda), declares:

*Nātmāśruternityatvāccatābhyaḥ.*[19]

*Jīvātmā* is not created, as there is no revelation about its birth and death in the *Śruti*.

*Mīmāṇsā* states on the subject:

*Nityatvāccānityairnāsti sambandhaḥ.*[20]

Since *jīvātmā* is eternal, it does not have any cause-effect relation with any other materials and substances.

*Śarīradāhe pātakābhāvāt.*[21]

In this *sūtra*, Gautama appropriates the immutability or eternity of *jīvātmā* stating that the cremation of the body is not sinful after the soul departs it, as the two are separate.

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*Vaiśeṣika* explains: *Tasya darvyatvanityatve vāyunā vyākhyāte.*[22]
As, the causative air is (relatively) permanent (as compared to its effect) and a substratum owing to it possessing odour, similarly the soul is eternal, not created out of any cause, and is a substratum having attributes like knowledge etc.

*Sāmkhaya* too, acknowledges *jīva* (soul) as eternal:

*Prakṛtipuruṣayoranyat sarvamnityam.*[23]

Other than *prakṛti* (material cause of the universe) and *puruṣa* (*jīvātmā* and *paramātmā*) everything is transient.

*Yoga* adds: *Sadā jñātāścittavṛttayastatprabhoḥ puruṣasyāpriṇāmitvāt.*[24]
The inherent disposition of the psyche or the mind leads one to know the eternal and inconsequential *jīvātmā.*

This affirms the notion that *jīvātmā* is eternal and is beyond the cycle of life and death, as stated in all the philosophies. The *darśankāras* also uphold it being conscious and capable of acquiring the highest knowledge.

*Jño'taeva*[25]

The *Atmā* (soul) is intelligent because it is eternal and immutable and also because it is so mentioned in the scriptures.

*Icchādveṣaprayatnasukhaduḥkhajñānānyātmano liṅgam.*[26]

*Icchā* (desire), *dveṣa* (malice), *prayatna* (efforts), *sukha* (pleasure), *duḥkha* (suffering) and *Jñāna* (learning or knowledge) are the various characteristics of *ātmā.*

Maharshi Kanāda[27] too, acknowledges *ātmā* attributed with the *guṇa* of *jñāna.*

*Kaivalyaṁ svarūpapratoṣṭha vā citiśaktiriti.*[28]

*Jīvātmā* achieves *mokṣa* (salvation) beaming with true knowledge. *Jīvātmā* enjoys the pleasure of *mokṣa* in the company of omniscient God.

Maharshi Patañjali refers to *jīva* as conscious and sagacious:

*Cidavasānā bhuktistatkarmārjitatvāt.*[29]

The conscious and sagacious *jīvātmā* is the performer of actions as well as the recipient of their fruits.

Another issue of debate among philosophers and commentators relates to the magnitude and dimension of *jīvātmā.* Some modern commentators believe *jīvātmā* to be *vibhu* (all pervading), while for others it is medium in size. In our opinion, all the six *Śāstrākārs* believe *jīvātmā* to be *aṇu* (minute or atomic). *Vedānta darśana* states:

*Utkrāntigatyāgatīnām.*[30]

The cyclic motion of *jīva* through the process of life and death proves that it is atomic (minutest), as it is impossible for the all-pervading to pass through the cycle of life and death and attain another form.

*Atharvaveda* refers to *jīvātmā* as being minutest i.e., thinner than the thin hair in the quote, *bālādekamaṇīyaskam.*[31] *Muṇḍakopaniṣad* mentions *ātmā* to be minutest and states that it can be realised through deep meditation - *eṣo'ṇurātmā cetasā veditavyaḥ*[32]

*Vedānta Darśana* states: *avirodhaścandanavat.*[33]
As, the coolness of sandal affects the entire body, though applied on a particular part, similarly, *jīvātmā* functions in multifarious ways, though residing at one place.

*Punarutpattiḥ pretyabhāvaḥ.*[34]

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Rebirth is nothing but an attainment of another bodily form by a *jīva* after death. This proves that Maharshi Gautama too acknowledges the transition of *jīva* from one place to another, which is possible in the atomic form, and not in the all pervading form (*vibhu*). Other philosophies affirm the notion of *jīva* being atomic (minutest).

On the question of the number of *jīvas*, the six *darśanas* are unanimous about it being infinite.

*Anśonānāvyapadeśāt.*[35]

Veda mentions that *jīva* are numerous and each occupies a definite space.

*Vyavasthāto nānā*[36]

The order of the world affirms that there are numerous *jīvas*. They take on many bodily forms and states like happy or unhappy, confined or liberated, full of vice or virtuous, pauper or king etc. This suggests that they are more than one in number.

*Janmādivyavasthāth puruṣabahutvam.*[37]

Birth-death and pleasure-suffering of beings prove the existence of numerous *jīvātmās* and not one.

*Śraddhāvīryasmṛtisamādhiprajñāipūrvaka itareṣām.*[38]

This *samādhi* comes to other yogis through faith, energy, memory, meditation and discrimination-energy. In this *sūtra*, Patañjali acknowledges the multiplicity of *jīva*.

All the *śāstrākārs* consider jīvātmā as doer and experiencer as well. Some notable evidence is as follows: *Vedānta Darśana* states: *Karttā Śāstrārthavattvāt.*[39]

*Jivātmā* is the performer, doer, as stated in the Vedas:

*Śāstraphalaṁ prayoktari tallakṣṇatvāt tasmātsvayaṁ prayoge syāt.*[40]

The performer of rituals like *yajña* is granted their fruits, one should therefore perform the rituals as per the *śāstras*. Thus *Mīmāṇsākār* too affirms *jīva* as the doer.

*Na karmkartṛsādhanavaiguṇyāt.*[41]

If one is not rewarded with the fruits of one's action, as stated in the Vedas, it proves that there exists a discrepancy between the *kartā* (doer), *karma* and its *sādhana* (means). Here, Maharshi Gautama, the propounder of *Nyāya*, also establishes *jīvātmā* as the performer.

*Vaiśeṣika* declares: *Pravṛttinivṛttī ca pratyagātmani dṛṣṭe paratra liṅgam.*[42]

Every *ātma* has the tendency to perform deeds as per its *pravṛtti* (propensity) and resignation to *nivṛtti* (dis-encumberance). The given *sūtra* affirms that *jīva* is the *kartā* (performer, doer) of *pravṛtti* (propensity) and *nivṛtti* (dis-encumberance).

*Sāmkhaya* states: *Kartuḥ phalāvagamaḥ.*[43]

The fruit of an action is rewarded to its doer, the *kartā*.

*Yoga* concurs: *Drasṭā dṛśimātraḥ śuddho'pi pratyayānupaśyaḥ.*[44]

The so far apparent immaculate *jīvātmā* too, is the *kartā* of *karma*.

The *Vaiśeṣika Darśanas* further says: *Ātmendriyamano'rthasannikarṣāt sukhduḥkhe.*[45]

*Jīvātmā* experiences pleasure or pain consequent upon its association with the senses, the mind and the worldly objects. Here *jīvātmā* has been taken as the experiencer.

*Bhoktṛbhāvāt.*[46]

The knowledge that *ātmā* experiences the fruits, distinguishes it from the body.

*Bhogāpavargārthaṁ dṛśyam.*[47]

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The world is for the *jīvātmā* to relish and to achieve renunciation. The six philosophies are thus, in agreement with each other, on all issues related to *jīvātmā*.

## PRAKṚTI (MATERIAL CAUSE OF THE UNIVERSE)

*Prakṛti* too, is an independent entity like *jīva* and Brahma. It too is eternal. It is inert (जड़) and the material cause of the universe. All the *darśanas* acknowledge *jīva* as the experiencer (*bhoktā*), *Paramātmā* as the efficient (agental, निमित्त) cause and *prakṛti* as the material cause of the universe. The following examples justify the explanation:

*Prakṛtiścapratijñādṛṣṭāntānuparodhāt.*[48]

*Prakṛti* is the material cause of the universe, as expounded by the Vedas.

*Sākṣāccobhayāmnānāt.*[49]

The efficient cause of the world is Brahma, whereas the material cause is *prakṛti*, as is evident from the distinct elaboration of both the causes in the Vedas.

*Sattvarajastamasāṁ sāmyāvasthā prakṛtiḥ.*[50]

An evenly balanced composition of *sattva, raja* and *tama* is known as *prakṛti*.

*Sadakāraṇavannityam.*[51]

What is causeless, is eternal. *Prakṛti*, the material cause of universe is eternal.

## MUKTI AND ITS MEANS

The six *darśanas* carry similar views on *mukti* (salvation) and its means. *Nyāya, Vedānta, Sāmkhaya* and *Yoga* state respectively:

*Tadatyantavimokṣo'pavargaḥ.*[52]

*Mukti* is the attainment of eternal bliss breaking the cycle of life and death.

*Brāhmeṇa jaiminirupanyāsādibhyaḥ.*[53]

The *jīva* experiences Brahmananda (the highest Bliss) in *mukti*.

*Atha trividhaduḥkhātyantanivṛttiratyantapuruṣārthaḥ.*[54]

The ultimate liberation from the three types of sufferings is *mukti*, confirms Kapila.

*Puruṣārthaśūnyānāṁ guṇānāṁ pratiprasavaḥ kaivalyaṁ svarūpapratiṣṭhā vā citiśaktiriti.*[55]

Salvation is attained when the soul is freed from the pleasure and pain caused by the qualities (*guṇas*), and it comes to rest in the nature of the Supreme Soul, the God. Here, Patañjali describes *mokṣa* as the state of complete absence of sufferings and attainment of Brahma.

*Tadabhāve sanyogābhāvo'pradurbhāvaśca mokṣaḥ.*[56]

The final liberation from the cycle of life and death is *mokṣa*.

There also appears no contradiction in the views pertaining to the means of attainment of *mokṣa* among the *śāstrakārs*.

*Araṇyaguhāpulinādiṣu yogābhyāsopadeśaḥ.*[57]

One should meditate in solitude at a river bank, in a forest and/or caves to attain *mokṣa*.

*Tadarthaṁ yamaniyamābhyāmātmasanskāro yogāccādhyātmavidhyupāyaiḥ.*[58]

The soul is to be purified by practising *yama-niyama, aṣṭāṅga yoga*, and other means prescribed in the spiritual books, to achieve *mokṣa*.

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*Dhyānadhārṇābhyāsavairāgyādibhistannirodhaḥ.*[59]

One should restrain the functions of the mind towards *vāsanās* (longings) through the regular practice of meditation, yoga, conviction and detachment.

*Abhiṣecanopavāsabrahmacaryagurukulavāsavānprasthayajñadānaprokṣaṇadiṅnakṣatra-mantrakālniyamāścādṛṣṭāya.*[60]

*Snāna* (bathing), *upavāsa* (fasting), *brahmacarya* (celibacy), *gurukulavāsa* (staying with the teacher in the gurukula), *vānaprastha* (the third stage of one's life), *yajña* (sacrifice), *dāna* (charity) and chanting of mantras etc. are the *dhārmic* practices for *mukti.*

*Śamadamādyupetaḥsyāttathāpi tu tadvidhestadaṅgatayā teṣāmavaśyamanuṣṭhyatvāt.*[61]

The one seeking salvation, should ardently observe all the practices of *śama* and *dama* to attain *mukti.*

*Yamaniyamāsanaprāṇāyāmapratyāhāradhāraṇādhyānasamādhayo'aṣṭāvaṅgāni.*[62]

One should observe the eight stages of Yoga – *Yama* (universal morality), *Niyama* (personal observances), *Āsanas* (body postures), *Prāṇāyāma* (breathing exercise and control of *Prāṇa*), *Pratyahāra* (control of the senses), *Dhāraṇa* (concentration and cultivating inner perceptual awareness), *Dhyāna* (meditation) and *Samādhi* (union with the divine).

The *darśanas* also unanimously opine that the *jīva* returns from *mukti.*

*Idānīmiva sarvatra nātyantocchedaḥ.*[63]

*Jīva* does come back to the world even after attaining *mokṣa.*

Some believe that the following *sūtra* of the *Sāmkhya* and *Vedānta* suggest that there is no return from *mokṣa*: *Na muktasya punarbandhayogo'pyānāvṛttiśruteḥ.*[64]

Shankara concludes from *Anāvṛttiḥ śbdādanāvṛttiḥśabdāt*[65] that it is not possible for the liberated soul to be entrapped in bondage. But one should not surmise thus from the given *sūtra*, which only hints at:

*Yāvadāyuṣaṁ brahmalokamabhisampadyate. Na ca punarāvarttate na ca punarāvarttate.*[66]

Till there exists a stipulated time of *mukti, jīva* does not turn back to a life form. But once the duration gets exhausted, it does attain a life form.

## VEDAS: ĪŚVARĪYA JÑĀNA

All the *darśanas* believe the Vedas to be the revealed knowledge.

*Śāstrayonitvāt.*[67]

Brahma is the source of all the luminous śāstras (the Vedas) that contain all true knowledge. None other than the Brahma has the capacity to create such texts.

*Bādarāyaṇasyānapekṣatvāt.*[68]

Since the Vedas are the creation of God, each *pada* is instinctively related to its meaning, and is therefore a precise and true source of the knowledge of dharma. The Vedas are self-validated because they are the revelations of God himself; and therefore need no external validation.

*Tadvacanādamnāyasya prāmāṇyam.*[69]

Being the revelation of God, the four Vedas are self-evident.

*Mantrāyurvedaprāmāṇyavacca tatprāmāṇyamāptaprāmāṇyāt.*[70]

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Being then creation of the Supreme Soul, God, the Vedas too are self-evident like the Mantra (incantations) and *Ayurveda* (Medicinal science).

*Pūrveṣāmapi guruḥ kālenānavacchedāt.*[71]

Since, *Parameśvara* is unconditioned by time, he is the guru (preceptor) of all the former rishis and Maharshis.

*Nijaśktyabhivyakteḥ svataḥ prāmāṇyam.*[72]

The Vedas are self-evident owing to their creation by the natural or inherent conscious power of God.

## PUNARJANMA (REBIRTH)

The given *sūtra* confirms the point of view of all the *darśanas* that one attains rebirth owing to the fruits of good and bad deeds:

*Punrutpattiḥ pretyabhāvaḥ.*[73]

The re-association of *jīvātmā* with *śarīra* (body), *indriya* (senses), *mana* (mind) and *buddhi* (intellect) after death, is termed *punarjanma.*

*Pūrvābhyastasmṛtyanubandhājjātasya harṣabhayaśokasampratipatteḥ.*[74]

The occurrence of *harṣa* (delight), *bhaya* (fear) and *śoka* (sorrow) etc., in a new-born child proves the notion of rebirth.

*Pretyāhārābhyāsakṛtātstanyābhilāṣāt.*[75]

Child's immediate desire to suckle is an indication towards its habit developed through various previous births.

*Svarasavāhī viduṣo'pi tathārūḍho'bhiniveśaḥ.*[76]

A learned person too, like all others, does not want to die. This is indicative of his conditioning owing to the experience of various rebirths.

*Sati mūle tdvipāko jātyāyurbhogāḥ.*[77]

Unexhausting ignorance *(kleśas* or pains*)*, impressions (*sanskārs*) and desires (वासनाएं) result in the continuous cycle of their rewards as life forms (*jātis* - species), life-terms (life-spans) and enjoyments (*bhoga*) from one life to the next.

*Ūdhrvaṁ sattvaviśālā.*[78]

People bearing *sattva* (illuminating) tendencies attain higher life-forms (species).

*Tamoviśālā mūlataḥ.*[79]

People having *tamoguṇa* (darkness, ignorance) etc., attain birth in lower life-forms.

*Madhye rajoviśālā*[80]

Whereas, people having *rajoguṇa* (passion) attain birth in the interstitial forms of life. *Sāmkhya* thus acknowledges the notion of rebirth.

*Kṛtaprayatnāpekṣastu vihitapratiṣiddhāvaiyathryādibhyaḥ.*[81]

Every *jīva* gets rewarded as per its good and bad deeds, as the next life-form. Had such a formulation not come to fore, both the ordained and the prohibited deeds would become fruitless or ineffective.

*Tadabhāve saṇyogābhāvo'prādurbhāvaśca mokṣaḥ*[82]

*Jīva* escapes the cycle of life and death in the absence of good and bad *Sakāma* (intended for worldly things) deeds, leading one to attain *mokṣa* (salvation).

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The above illustrations confirm the notion of *punarjanma* in all the *darśanas*.

## CLARIFICATION OF AN APPARENT CONTRADICTION

Mīmāṇsā holds *śabda* (word, sound) as eternal, whereas, it is considered transient in *Nyāya*. The two appear contradictory, but in reality, are not. The word is of two types – *nitya* (eternal) and *anitya* (transient). Those words and their meanings which are referred to as revelation (God's knowledge) are eternal, while those generated by human imagination are transient in nature. Vedic words are expounded as eternal in *Mīmāṇsā*, because God, their originator, bears eternal knowledge.

Thus, there appears no antagonism between the *nitya* and *anitya* nature of *śabda* in the *darśanas*.

## SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHIES

One of the chief characteristics of the Indian philosophies is their pragmatic approach. They aim at liberating humans from the shackles of *duḥkha* (sufferings), *rāga* (passion), *dveṣa* (malice) and *ajñānatā* (ignorance), and leading them to *mokṣa*.

Their second characteristic is an optimistic approach. The Indian philosophies address the issue of human suffering and its alleviation for the betterment of humanity. The wise, after deep contemplation, have arrived at the conclusion that this world is abject suffering. This suffering is the conjunction of *drasṭa* (seer) and *dṛśya* (scene) and one should find ways to eliminate it.

The third characteristic is their ethical and moral approach which is apparent in the belief of humans being rewarded with the fruit of their actions. The seeds of one's actions never go waste, and one is duly rewarded by the predefined deeds. Both *Nyāya* and Vaiśeṣika label this invisible predefined as *adṛṣṭa* (unforeseen or destiny).

The fourth characteristic of the Indian philosophies is *karma-phala siddhānta* (the doctrine of actions and consequences). They affirm that every action is met with its negative or positive reward. The acceptance of *karma-phala* principle discourages *pāpa-karma* (sinful deeds) and encourages *śubha-karma* (good-deeds) for a better future.

The fifth prominent characteristic of Indian philosophies is that they denote the path to *mokṣa*. While ignorance binds one to this world, knowledge liberates. There are two possible ways to lead a life – *preya* and *śreya* – the path of desires and the path of goodness. Fascinated by the beauties of this world, one gets trapped in the delusion, caused by *rāga* (passion) and *dveṣa* (malice). This path of *preya* (fascination, endearment) is the chief cause of one's downfall. The path of *śreya* (goodness, merit) is for the goodwill and benefit of the humankind. The *darśanas* advise us to observe *yama* (universal morality), *niyama* (personal observances) of *aṣṭāṅga* (eight-fold) yoga to tread the path of *śreya*. One should try to make all efforts to attain *Brahma* and eliminate the tri-fold sufferings, so as to attain liberation.

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## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. दृश्यतेऽनेन इति दर्शनम्।
2. *Kautilya Arthaśāstra*, 2.13; प्रदीपः सर्वविद्यानामुपायः सर्वकर्मणाम्। आश्रयः सर्वधर्माणां शश्वदान्वीक्षकी मता।
3. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 2.4.2; कथं तेनामृता स्याम्।
4. *Ibid.*; अमृतत्वस्य तु नाऽऽशास्ति वित्तेनेति।
5. *Ibid.*, 2.4.3; येनाहं नामृता स्यां किमहं तेन कुर्याम्।
6. *Ibid.*, 2.4.5; ...आत्मा वा अरे द्रष्टव्यः श्रोतव्यो मन्तव्यो निदिध्यासितव्यो मैत्रेयात्मनो वा अरे दर्शनेन श्रवणेन मत्या विज्ञानेनेदं सर्वं विदितम्।।
7. *Nyāya Darśana* of Gautama Muni, *Vaiśeṣika Darśana* of Kanāda, *Sāmkhya Darśana* of Kapila Muni, *Yoga Darśana* of Patañjali, *Mīmāṇsā Darśana* of Jaimini, *Vedānta Darśana* of Vyāsa.
8. Swami Dayanand, *Satyarth Prakash*, (English translation by Dr. Chiranjiva Bharadwaja, 1975), Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, New Delhi, chapter III, pp. 75-76.
9. *Ibid.* chapter VIII, pp. 259-260.
10. *Vedānta Darśana*, 1.1.2; जन्माद्यस्य यतः।
11. *Nyāya Darśana*, 4.1.19; ईश्वरः कारणं पुरुषकर्माफल्यदर्शनात्।
12. *Vaiśeṣika Darśana*, 1.1.3; तद्वचनादाम्नायस्य प्रामाण्यम्।
13. *Yoga Darśana*, 1.23; ईश्वरप्रणिधानाद्वा।
14. *Sāmkhya Darśana*, 3.56; स हि सर्ववित् सर्वकर्ता।
15. *Ibid.*, 3.57; ईदृशेश्वरसिद्धिः सिद्धा।
16. *Mīmāṇsā Darśana*, 6.2.19; देवताश्रये च।
17. *Vedānta Darśana*, 1.1.12; आनन्दमयोऽभ्यासात्।
18. *Ibid.*, 1.1.17; भेदव्यपदेशाच्च।
19. *Ibid.*, 2.3.17; नात्माश्रुतेर्नित्यत्वाच्चताभ्यः।
20. *Mīmāṇsā Darśana*, 6.7.5; नित्यत्वाच्चानित्यैर्नास्ति सम्बन्धः।
21. *Nyāya Darśana*, 3.1.4; शरीरदाहे पातकाभावात्।
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23. *Sāmkhya Darśana*, 5.68; प्रकृतिपुरुषयोरन्यत् सर्वमनित्यम्।
24. *Yoga Darśana*, 4.18; सदा ज्ञाताश्चित्तवृत्तयस्तत्प्रभोः पुरुषस्यापरिणामित्वात्।
25. *Vedānta Darśana*, 2.3.18; ज्ञोऽतएव।
26. *Nyāya Darśana*, 1.1.10; इच्छाद्वेषप्रयत्नसुखदुःखज्ञानान्यात्मनो लिंगम्।
27. *Vaiśeṣika Darśana*, 3.2.4;
28. *Yoga Darśana*, 4.34; कैवल्यं स्वरूपप्रतिष्ठा वा चितिशक्तिरिति।
29. *Sāmkhya Darśana*, 6.55; चिदवसाना भुक्तिस्तत्कर्मार्जितत्वात्।
30. *Vedānta Darśana*, 2.3.19; उत्क्रान्तिगत्यागतीनाम्।
31. *Atharvaveda*, 10.8.25; बालादेकमणीयस्कम्
32. *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*, 3.1.9; एषोऽणुरात्मा चेतसा वेदितव्यः
33. *Vedānta Darśana*, 2.3.23; अविरोधश्चन्दनवत्।
34. *Nyāya Darśana*, 1.1.19; पुनरुत्पत्तिः प्रेत्यभावः।
35. *Vedānta Darśana*, 2.3.43; अंशोनानाव्यपदेशात्।
36. *Vaiśeṣika Darśana*, 3.2.20; व्यवस्थातो नाना।
37. *Sāmkhya Darśana*, 1.114; जन्मादिव्यवस्थातः पुरुषबहुत्वम्।
38. *Yoga Darśana*, 1.20; श्रद्धावीर्यस्मृतिसमाधिप्रज्ञापूर्वक इतरेषाम्।
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41. *Nyāya Darśana*, 2.1.58; न कर्मकर्तृसाधनवैगुण्यात्।
42. *Vaiśeṣika Darśana*, 3.1.19; प्रवृत्तिनिवृत्ती च प्रत्यगात्मनि दृष्टे परत्र लिंगम्।
43. *Sāmkhya Darśana*, 1.71; कर्तुः फलावगमः।

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44. *Yoga Darśana*, 2.20; द्रष्टा दृशिमात्रः शुद्धोऽपि प्रत्ययानुपश्यः।
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52. *Nyāya Darśana*, 1.1.22; तदत्यन्तविमोक्षोऽपवर्गः।
53. *Vedānta Darśana*, 4.4.5; ब्राह्मेण जैमिनिरुपन्यासादिभ्यः।
54. *Sāmkhya Darśana*, 1.1; अथ त्रिविधदुःखात्यन्तनिवृत्तिरत्यन्तपुरुषार्थः।
55. *Yoga Darśana*, 4.34; पुरुषार्थशून्यानां गुणानां प्रतिप्रसवः कैवल्यं स्वरूपप्रतिष्ठा वा चितिशक्तिरिति।
56. *Vaiśeṣika Darśana*, 5.2.18; तदभावे संयोगाभावोऽप्रादुर्भावश्च मोक्षः।
57. *Nyāya Darśana*, 4.2.42; अरण्यगुहापुलिनादिषु योगाभ्यासोपदेशः।
58. *Ibid.*, 4.2.46; तदर्थं यमनियमाभ्यामात्मसंस्कारो योगाच्चाध्यात्मविध्युपायैः।
59. *Sāmkhya Darśana*, 6.29; ध्यानधारणाभ्यासवैराग्यादिभिस्तन्निरोधः।
60. *Vaiśeṣika Darśana*, 6.2.2; अभिषेचनोपवासब्रह्मचर्यगुरुकुलवासवानप्रस्थयज्ञदानप्रोक्षणदिङ्नक्षत्रमन्त्रकाल–नियमाश्चादृष्टाय।
61. *Vedānta Darśana*, 3.4.27; शमदमाद्युपेतः स्यात्तथापि तु तद्विधेस्तदंगतया तेषामवश्यानुष्ठेयत्वात्।
62. *Yoga Darśana*, 2.29; यमनियमासनप्राणायामप्रत्याहारधारणाध्यानसमाधयोऽष्टावङ्गानि।
63. *Sāmkhya Darśana*, 1.124; इदानीमिव सर्वत्र नात्यन्तोच्छेदः।
64. *Ibid.*, 6.17; न मुक्तस्य पुनर्बन्धयोगोऽप्यानावृत्तिश्रुतेः।
65. *Vedānta Darśana*, 4.4.22; अनावृत्तिः शब्दादनावृत्तिः शब्दात्।
66. *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, 8.15.1; यावदायुषं ब्रह्मलोकमभिसम्पद्यते। न च पुनरावर्त्तते न च पुनरावर्त्तते।
67. *Vedānta Darśana*, 1.1.3; शास्त्रयोनित्वात्।
68. *Mīmāṇsā Darśana*, 1.1.5; बादरायणस्यानपेक्षत्वात्।
69. *Vaiśeṣika Darśana*, 1.1.3; तद्वचनादाम्नायस्य प्रामाण्यम्।
70. *Nyāya Darśana*, 2.1.68; मन्त्रायुर्वेदप्रामाण्यवच्च तत्प्रामाण्यमाप्तप्रामाण्यात्।
71. *Yoga Darśana*, 1.26; पूर्वेषामपि गुरुः कालेनानवच्छेदात्।
72. *Sāmkhya Darśana*, 5.51; निजशक्त्यभिव्यक्तेः स्वतः प्रामाण्यम्।
73. *Nyāya Darśana*, 1.1.19; पुनरुत्पत्तिः प्रेत्यभावः।
74. *Ibid.*, 3.1.19; पूर्वाभ्यस्तस्मृत्यनुबन्धाज्जातस्य हर्षभयशोकसम्प्रतिपत्तेः।
75. *Ibid.*, 3.1.22; प्रेत्याहाराभ्यासकृतात्स्तन्याभिलाषात्।
76. *Yoga Darśana*, 2.9; स्वरसवाही विदुषोऽपि तथारूढोऽभिनिवेशः।
77. *Ibid.*, 2.13; सति मूले तद्विपाको जात्यायुर्भोगाः।
78. *Sāmkhya Darśana*, 3.48; ऊर्ध्वं सत्त्वविशाला।
79. *Ibid.*, 3.49; तमोविशाला मूलतः।
80. *Ibid.*, 3.50; मध्ये रजोविशाला।
81. *Vedānta Darśana*, 2.3.42; कृतप्रयत्नापेक्षस्तु विहितप्रतिषिद्धावैयर्थ्यादिभ्यः।
82. *Vaiśeṣika Darśana*, 5.2.18; तदभावे संयोगाभावोऽप्रादुर्भावश्च मोक्षः।

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# CHAPTER 35

# Shankara's Vedānta and Dayanand

*Rajendra Vidyalankar*

A well-established principle of logical thought, whether scientific or spiritual, is that for any action or happening there must pre-exist some cause – intelligent or material. Accordingly, speculating about the basic and original cause of the whole visible universe and cosmic activity has always been pivotal to all philosophical and spiritual thinking in India. Monism i.e., Advaitism (Advaitavāda) posits itself as one of the major philosophical answers to this perennial query of the inquisitive human mind. According to this philosophy, the only reality that has eternal existence is the Brahma or Brahman. All the forms, whether animate or inanimate, are nothing but the manifestations of Brahman. The philosophy goes to the extent of declaring that each and every phenomenon or form that we perceive in this universe anywhere is mere illusion or mirage, called 'māyā', which is the indescribable and incomprehensible power of the Brahma.

## FROM SHANKARA TO DAYANAND

### *The Advent of Advaitavāda*

The great Indian scholar Acharya Shankara, also known as the ādi Shankarāchārya, is popularly regarded as the initiator, enunciator and propagator of this theory. However, it was his Guru's Guru, Acharya Gauḍapāda, who had already instituted the seed of this philosophical school in his great work, the Māṇḍūkya Kārikās. Shankarāchārya, it is commonly believed, relied mainly on the Bādarāyaṇa's Brahma Sūtras, the principal Upaniṣads and the Śrīmadbhāgwadgītā to perfect his philosophy of Advaita. However, a closer perusal of his celebrated Vedānta Bhāṣya reveals that he expounded the Gauḍapāda philosophy only. Prof. Surendranath Dasgupta asserts that nobody before

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Gauḍapāda and Shankara had ever propounded the theory of Advaitism including the advaitic interpretation of the Brahma Sūtras.[1]

Several scholars of Advaitism and Buddhism are of the view that both the Acharyas – Gauḍapāda and Shankara had been deeply influenced by the Buddhist philosophy, as a number of tenets adopted by them are strikingly similar to those of Buddhism. A conspicuous example is the description of *Ātmā* found in the Mādhyamik Kārikās[2] authored by the Buddhist philosopher Nāgārjuna preceding the Māṇḍūkya Kārikās[3] of Gauḍapāda. Both of these hold that the *ātmā* is neither real (*sat*), nor unreal (*asat*); it is not even dualistic i.e., (*sat+asat*), nor any different from (*sat-asat*). Having taken note of several such similarities, many commentators impute that Acharya Shankara is but a covert Buddhist.[4]

In due course, however, many renowned and respected commentators like the Acharyas Sureshvara, Padmapāda, Vāchaspati Mishra, Chitsukha, Vidyāraṇya, Sarvajñātmamuni, Madhusūdan Saraswati, Apyaya Dikshit and Sadānanda etc., have written scholarly commentaries confirming and supporting Shankara Vedānta, or *Navīna Vedānta* as has his philosophy since come to be fondly known.

Devendranath Mukhopadyaya, the author of Swami Dayanand's biography, observes,

> The Neo-Vedānta philosophy – *Brahma satyam jaganmithyā, jīvo brahmaiva nāparaḥ* – enunciated by Shankarāchārya is generally recognised as the mainstay of most of the eminent Hindu scholars. In support of this philosophy Shankara and his followers have coined and articulated a plethora of numerous arguments. In their endeavour to substantiate and defend the premise, they wrote lengthy treatises and built a quagmire of abstruse terminology, logic, arguments and analogies (*yuktis*). With the help of his piercing argumentations, Shankara succeeded in vanquishing many Jaina and Buddhist philosophers in Shāstrārthas – the polemic duels; and won over numerous Rajas and Maharajas of his times, thereby almost obliterating the two prevalent orders – the Jaina and the Buddhist philosophies – from India. Since then Advaita has remained the main sway and underpinning of the Hindu philosophical thought.[5]

***Swami Dayanand's Attack on Advaitavāda***

Towards the latter half of the nineteenth century, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, the founder of Arya Samaj, undertook a detailed chronological and philosophical re-examination of the Shankara's Advaitism. In his close and in-depth scrutiny Dayanand observed and identified several logical anomalies, weaknesses and misleading contradictions.

It is Swami Dayanand who decided to logically bombard the edifice of Advaitavāda in his book *Advaitamata Khaṇḍana.* Pandit Lekhram, an eminent Arya Samaj scholar, states that this tract – *Advaita Khaṇḍana* was written and got published by Dayanand after the historic *Kashi Shāstrārtha* and that it proved to be most effective force in demolishing the Advaita fort. Swami Dayanand authored another book on the

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subject in 1874 titled as *Vedāntidhvāntanivāraṇa.* The Swami has also included a detailed and minute analysis of the Advaita view in the eleventh chapter of Satyarth Prakash.

***Swami Dayanand's Appreciation of Shankarāchārya***

In spite of the scathing criticism of Shankara's Advaita principle, the evaluation of Shankarāchārya's personality and work by Swami Dayanand is quite interesting, and at places, surprisingly flattering.

The Swami observes that the excessive ritualism and exploitative behaviour of the Brahmins/Purohits of that period was continuously degrading and eroding the Vedic (Hindu) values, turning the Indian masses away from the Vedic faith and pushing them towards the Jaina and Buddhist religions. By the time Shankara appeared on the scene, both these orders had earned much popular respect and following in the Indian society. Shankara realised the urgent need for revamping the degenerated character of the Vedic religion, and waged an unrelenting campaign, which recorded a huge and astounding success. Recognising this herculean task of Shankarāchārya and analysing his personality and views, Dayanand writes, "If the principle of oneness of the *jīva* and *Brahma* was Shankara's own view, then it was not in order; but if it was adopted by him for countering the prevailing Jaina tenets, then he accomplished something of worth."[6] Dayanand seems to be pretty convinced that Shankara had evolved and used the Advaita principle only to defeat the Jains and once again attract the people toward the Vedic religion; and not in pursuit of and to arrive at some real spiritual Truth. Therefore, his views were born out of the intense desire to address the prevailing degenerative circumstance; and not from the core of his heart. At another place Swami Dayanand writes, "It seems that maybe Shankarāchārya etc., had accepted the Advaita view just to condemn the Jaina philosophy, as sometimes such indulgent and committed scholars tend to go even against their own understanding and conviction, but with a pious objective only."[7] While Dayanand uses very terse and bitter language to criticise the propagators of all other religions and their philosophies, on Shankarāchārya he is not only soft, but is empathetic too. In his famous book Satyarth Prakash, while critically examining the philosophical principles and personality of Shankara, he recognises that Shankara was not only an erudite scholar of all *Shāstras* and Vyākaraṇa, but also had a deep and intimate knowledge of the Jaina philosophy; and that his arguments were very potent and convincing.

Dayanand also admiringly notes that to stem the tide of ever increasing Jaina influence and to propagate Vedism among the masses, Shankara wanted to win over the very influential Raja Sudhanva of Ujjain, who had embraced Jainism. For this, he on several occasions consciously chose Ujjain as the place for Shāstrārtha duels with the Jaina scholars. Gradually, Raja Sudhanva started getting inclined towards the Vedic view. The process had thus been initiated, but Shankarāchārya was surreptitiously given some poisonous substance, and within six months thereof, he died.[8]

History proves that Shankara's intense and unrelenting campaign made an indelible mark and left a huge influence on the masses. For ten years, he roamed through the whole of Aryavartta (India) to demolish Jainism and re-enshrine the Vedic thought. In admiration of this gigantic effort of Shankara, Swami Dayanand records,

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"From that time on, everyone started wearing the sacred thread Yajñopavīta and studying the Vedas. Shankarāchārya also criticised Shaivism, as well as the extreme materialist philosophy known as Vāmamārg, both of which had acquired some influence in the country by then. He, along with Raja Sudhanva, had a wish to establish a Vedic Pāṭhaśālas (Schools) in the Jaina temples."[9]

In spite of all the praise for Shankara's effective and timely accomplishment on the socio-religious front in negating the Jaina philosophy and rejuvenating the Vedic one, Swami Dayanand has vehemently criticised and opposed his philosophical views on solid logical grounds.

## DAYANAND'S CRITICISM OF ADAITAVĀDA

### *Advaitavāda and Upaniṣads*

Dayanand does not agree with the common perception that the Upaniṣads provide the supportive base for Advaitism. He asserts that the Upaniṣadic phrases and expressions cited by Shankara are only random, selective, incomplete and detached from their contexts. He cautions that the real meaning and nuances of the Upaniṣads cannot be properly comprehended if the basic poetic import of the Upaniṣadic language is ignored. Philosophical principles expressed in poetic form always tend to become more sentimental and spiritual as compared to those in bland prose. This is the secret of the allegories, similes and metaphors etc., used in the Upaniṣads. These are purported to elaborate the sudden and abrupt burst of emotional feelings, the epiphanies of the seeker on experiencing unity between the being (*jīvātmā*) and the ultimate Being (*Paramātmā*). Therefore, any attempt to describe the mental state of a person totally immersed in that extreme ecstasy and beatitude in critical and logical terms (*abhidhā*) only exposes one's own ignorance of the basic style of the Upaniṣads. Secondly, the whole context and text of the Upaniṣadic writings needs to be studied instead of their partial and out of context reading.

Dayanand also insists that one has to protractedly and consistently practise Samādhi for properly discerning the real, deep and full nuances thereof.[10] The process of acquiring the spiritual knowledge enshrined in the Upaniṣads is not grounded in mere ordinary logic. By relying on the very deep, subtle and contemplative method of *Samādhi,* the meditator gets detached from all worldly feelings and attachments, and completely concentrates on establishing a direct mental contact with the ultimate Reality. Once that position is attained, all doubts are allayed.

### *Brahman: The Only Reality?*

The most forceful and frontal principle underpinning Shankara's philosophy is that Brahman is the only Reality of the universe, and all else is a mere mirage or an illusion. Swami Dayanand has no hesitation in acknowledging the eternal existence of that Reality, the Brahma, but refuses to accept that it is the only reality or truth. The whole Vedic literature including the Vedas unanimously accepts that the primordial root of all true knowledge and objects made known by the true knowledge is just One – the only Conscious and Blissful Being, the Creator of the universe. He though is addressed by

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many names, yet is the same and the Only One. He is always there – before the creation, during the existence of the universe and even after the creation is annihilated. That, however, does not imply that all other forms and phenomena of the universe are unreal and non-existent.

One of the main Upaniṣadic phrases used by Shankara to support his thesis is *Sarvam khalvidam Brahma tajjalāniti śānta upāsīta,*[11] which has been drawn from the Chāndogyopaniṣad. Usually only the first part of this sentence i.e., *Sarvam khalvidam Brahma* is invoked to elaborate the Shankaran concept. The Advaitists interpret the phrase to mean that whatever is visible or invisible, to be more succinct, all that is manifest or unmanifest, is Brahma only. Accepting this as the correct meaning would obviously imply that the authors of the Upaniṣads, who created the scriptures with the clear intention of teaching the method of praying and attaining Brahma, would be seen prompting and directing the Brahma-seeker to worshipping the worldly existence and objects too, as all that is Brahma. This kind of interpretation would be totally against the import and spirit of the Upaniṣadic teaching and a gross distortion of the meaning thereof. That is what Dayanand warns against.

The full statement of the Chāndogyopaniṣad is:

*Sarvam khalvidam Brahma tajjalāniti śānta upāsīta. Atha khalu kratumayaḥ puruṣo yathā kraturasmilloke puruṣo bhawati tathetaḥ pretya bhawati sa kratum kurvīta.*

This says that the whole universe and its objects are transient and impermanent, so one must not be indulgent therein, rather should pray to and worship only That, Who is eternal and permanent and has created all this.

The object of the verb *upāsīta* in the above sentence is not clear from the sequence of various parts proposed by Shankara and his followers. Many a question arises: who should the seeker pray to? If the whole universe is Brahma, or if the Brahma and the universe are the same, then what is the harm in worshipping the universe and its objects? Also, if the whole universe is Brahma, where is the question of the universe getting born or created, as the Brahma is always existent. So the whole statement about creation becomes irrelevant and meaningless. The correct position is that Brahma is the object of the verb *upāsīta* in the above Upaniṣadic sentence. And therefore, the correct formulation or sequence should be *sarvam khalvidam brahma tajjalāniti śāntaḥ Brahma upāsīta*; the meaning being that the whole universe is created, sustained and annihilated by Brahma, it is impermanent and transient, so worship only the Brahma. The *jīva*, the human being is warned not to indulge in the universe, the material possessions. All material objects are subject to decay. So worship only Him, who is the creator, sustainer and annihilator of all, but is undecaying Himself.

***Jīva: No different from Brahman?***

The second pillar of Shankara's philosophy is that the living being (*jīva*) is not different from the Brahma. All followers of Vedic philosophy including Dayanand unanimously believe that in every human body exists a consciousness or conscious element, and that it is the *jīvātmā*. All the seers and sages, since ancient, times have said that this consciousness is felt and experienced differently in every individual body; and since

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there is no limit to the number of individual bodies, the number of this individual consciousness, the soul, is also limitless.

Shankara's assumption is that the only conscious element is Brahma, hence there cannot be any other consciousness. He says that in the beginning of the creation, the Only Existent Blissful Brahma expresses Himself through His *māyā* – the will or the wisdom, His creative power; and Himself becomes the Universe and the personal being (*jīva*). But being beset with ignorance, Avidyā in Shankaran parlance, the human being does not comprehend his own self. *Jīvātmā*, the personal being is not created or formed by the Brahma, but Brahma himself assumes the live worldly form.[12] This state continues till the living being, the *jīvātmā*, deems himself as a separate entity (*upādhi*), which happens because of ignorance (*avidyā*). When the ignorance (*avidyā*) is dispelled, the *jīva* acquires full or real knowledge of Brahma (*Brahma Jñāna*) and thereby attains unity with, or rather becomes the Brahma, which he essentially is a part of. This is not acceptable to Dayanand.

Swami Dayanand discusses this Advaitic principle of being-Brahma in form of an interesting question-answer style. He invokes and restates the Advaitists' own assertion that the *jīva* does not know the fact that he himself is Brahma as the *jīva* is born of ignorance; and that the ignorance (*ajñāna*) resides in Brahma, who Himself has no beginning. And that Brahma at this stage forgets his own self and essence, which again is due to ignorance. Although ignorance is the trait of the *jīva*, and not of the all-knowing Brahma, yet this happens because of the state that He manifests Himself in, the *jīva*, the segregated or confined or limited existence called *upādhi*. Yet this *māyā* is indescribable, unidentifiable and beyond the ones like animate-inanimate, true-untrue or real-unreal etc. All this according to Dayanand is illogical.[13]

Here Dayanand raises some very interesting and serious queries. The first is that if there does not exist any other entity or element except the Brahma, where do the individual beings, the *jīva* or other forms come from? Second – when is the Pure Brahma vested with or afflicted or engulfed by this form or *upādhi*, the adjunct or the appellation that limits Brahma's own existence and also knowledge? And third – why so? The Advaitists have nowhere provided any answer to this 'why', at least! They simply say that it happens just because of the *līla* or *māyā* – the illusory drama of Brahma, which by no standard of logic is a satisfactory reply. Rather it appears to be a patently evasive and escapist answer. When goaded again to tender a plausible answer, they say that it happens on its own and is so since eternity. This, according to Dayanand, is one of the weakest points of their philosophy.

***The Six-fold Division of Elements***

In an effort to answer the questions raised earlier, the Advaitists come up with a set of complex arguments and clichés. They propose a six-fold division of all elements that comprise the universe. These are: 1. *Jīva* (the personal being), 2. The *Īśvara* (God), 3. The Śuddha Cetana Brahma (Pure Conscious Brahma), 4. *Jīva Brahma Bheda* – (the distinction or difference between the individual being and the God), 5. *Avidyā, Ajñāna, Māyā* (Ignorance or Illusion) and 6. *Māyā Cetana-Brahma Sambandha* – (the relationship between māyā and Pure Conscious Brahma).[14] Of all these, the Pure Brahma himself is

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called the *jīva* (the personal being), when He transcends to the state of action and becomes Īśvara or God vested with ignorance – *avidyā, māyā* and or *upādhi.* When this state ceases, then again, only He, the Pure Conscious Brahma remains. Out of these six elements, only the Brahma is without any beginning and without any end, while the remaining five, though without a beginning, do have an end.

Dayanand calls all this, too abstruse and complex a logical quagmire, full of anomalies. He once again raises the question that if the Brahma Himself becomes the *jīva* when he assumes an active state or form, it obviously means that he gets born, and by that virtue is He not bound to be an entity that must have a beginning? One may legitimately ask how an entity that gets born can be dubbed or deemed to be without a beginning? Thus thinking of *jīva* as Brahma, or *jīva* and Brahma as One, is wholly anomalous. Because if both are one, even if similar in not having a beginning, how can they differ or be dissimilar in terms of 'end' – Brahma, having no end but the *jīva* being with an end?

***The Confusion about Māyā***

Dayanand notes that according to the Advaitists, avidyā or māyā is the cause (*kāraṇa*) of the universe. What this *avidyā* is, however, has not been amplified and precisely defined by them. They feign that it is not definable, yet assert that it is the elemental and material cause of the Creation. They also insist that whether avidyā or māyā is the same as Brahma, or different, cannot be stated. That implies that māyā is no different from Brahma. Therefore, Brahma himself is the cause, and more importantly the material cause, the *upādana kāraṇa* of the universe, which they do accept.

If the Advaitists' statement, that *avidyā* cannot be described, is accepted, it certainly is not Brahma. Brahma is the Ultimate Reality – *Sat-Chit-Ananda Swarūpa* – Existence, Consciousness and Bliss personified. These are the unanimously acknowledged exclusive traits or the qualities/capabilities that only Brahma has. So, Brahma is describable via these qualities. If *avidyā* or māyā cannot be so described, as they claim, then at least one thing is clear that māyā cannot be Brahma. So, māyā is obviously different. Since māyā exists in form of the universe, it must have its own independent existence. Thus even the assertion that Brahma is the only existence seems wrong. It may be correct to say that māyā does not have eternal existence, and that it is subject to change, and hence keeps on transforming; and also that the Ultimate Reality is that which is eternal and unchangeable and not affected by time, and as such remains the same in all three states or phases of time *trikāla* – the creation, the sustenance and the annihilation, called as *utpatti, sthiti* and *pralaya.* That is Brahma alone, but māyā is not so. So, how can the two be the same?

Another fallacious assumption of the Advaitists pointed out by Dayanand is that māyā's existence is not affected or inhibited by time, and it remains there in all three states or phases of time and creation. Thus according to them māyā too is *trikālābādhya* i.e., it not bound by time or affected by the three phases of time. Yet, they say it is materially resultant and an effect only (*kāryarūpa* and *pariṇāmi*), therefore, subject to change. If it be so, then it should be describable in these terms or via these traits. They also believe that the universe emanates from the Brahma. Then the Brahma too should

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be subject to change, transformation and some result, which they say He is not, yet they assert Brahma and Avidyā are one. Is it not circular reasoning, hence unacceptable, asks Dayanand!

As already stated, Avidyā is also supposed to be without beginning, but subject to an end. If it is said to be the cause of Creation – the Universe, it should always be present and pre-existing. How can it have an end then? They hold that as soon as the *jīva* acquires Brahma Jñāna or full knowledge, avidyā or māyā vanishes and the personal being starts appearing as the Brahma, or gets transformed into Brahma. However, the Advaitists are not able to answer the simple question: who attains or acquires the Brahma *Jñāna*? If it is Brahma Himself, then was He ignorant till now? If yes, then how can the All-knowing (*Sarvajña*) Brahma be simultaneously all-knowing (*Jñānī*) as well as ignorant (*Ajñānī*)? If that happens because of the contact with māyā, then how can the unconscious māyā be capable of influencing or overcoming the Almighty Conscious Brahma? Keeping all these questions and doubts in mind, Swami Dayanand writes,

> If the Brahma Himself is the *jīva* and not different or separate, then all the personal beings should be all-knowing (*sarvajña*). If one personal being has ignorance or pain, all Brahmas (the other personal beings) too must experience or feel that. And by citing the pitcher-space (*ghaṭākāśa*), building-space (*maṭhākāśa*) and rope-snake (*rajju-sarpa*) analogies, you (the Advaitists) have rendered the Pure, All-wise, Ever-Free Brahma to be impure, ignorant, and subject to bondage, and divided the Indivisible Brahma into pieces.[15]

***Is the Universe Unreal?***

Dayanand raises another very important question that if the universe does not have any existence, why and how is it visible and perceptible everywhere and to everyone. The Advaitists say it is because of an optical or imaginary illusion.[16] They try to explain this through various analogies like that of seeing a snake in the rope (*rajju mein sarpa*), silver in the mother-of-pearls (*sīpa mein rajata*) and water in the mirage (*jala mein magatṛṣṇikā*) etc.[17] Swami Dayanand rejects these as grossly obscure and misleading. He observes, "You (Advaitists) are confused by deeming the rope as a thing or entity and the snake as nothing or non-entity. Is the snake not an object? You may say that it as an object but 'not in the rope', but the observer does carry the image of a real snake in his mind. Then that snake is not a non-object. Similar is the case of *Puruṣa-in-Sthāṇu, silver-in-sea shell* etc."[18] It is worth noting that if something is mistaken as something else termed by Advaitists as *adhyāsa* or *adhyāropa* meaning super-imposition, this by no stretch of imagination should imply that the other thing does not exist. Even if one somehow sees a snake in the rope, snake still exists, maybe not at that place but at some other; and its shape and the fear of its poison are quite real and not mere illusions. And why is it that in the rope the observer sees only the snake and not some other things like a pitcher, a horse, a buffalo etc. Therefore, all such analogies only diverting attention from the main issue and are thus misleading.

The Advaitists come up with another implausible answer. They say that the illusion comes from the entanglement of the *Antaḥkarana* – the inner consciousness or

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conscience of the personal being, the *jīva* – with Brahma. The attempt to prove Brahma to be *jīva* via the conscience-Brahma entanglement is dismissed by Dayanand as childish. He asks:

> the inner conscience is mobile, piecemeal and the Brahma is stable and indivisible. If you do not accept Brahma and the *jīva* as separate, then you should answer the question that when the conscience moves to different places, would Brahma become ignorant in those regions; and wherever the conscience departs from, in that place would God once again regain knowledge (Brahmahood). Just as an umbrella blocks the light by creating a veil wherever it goes, and allows the light in the place that it leaves; the conscience would render the Brahma knowledgeable or ignorant, bound or unbound as it moves from place to place. Brahma being Indivisible or Undivided, such an impact of the soul even in one place should affect the Brahma in all places, since He is Conscious and Omnipresent Himself.[19]

Dayanand asks if the Brahma by nature is All-conscious, how can he remain oblivious to an impact anywhere in the universe? On this issue S. Radhakrishnan too jokingly observes, "How the rope looks to be a snake is a query often raised by the school children, and the philosophers fail to reply."[20]

Adding some more confusion to the illusion theory, the Advaitists advance the suggestion of deeming the universe as a dream. It is a known fact that a dream is always based on the memory of some real life experience that may be visual, or through hearing, or sheer imagination. But a dream is never coherent, while all cosmic happening or existence of the universe has a certain sequence and coherence. The dream may be based on some live experience, but life or live experience can never be dependent or based on a dream. Dayanand cites the example of a blind person who cannot dream a form, or a scene. The dream analogy too thus turns out to be wholly unsound and unconvincing. During a discussion with the Buddhist scholars, Shankara is himself on record to have conceded that dream is only a memory, having no real existence.[21]

About the illusion, the mistaken identity theory, Shankara brings out another argument. He says, "Illusion (or dream) is unreal (or untrue), but without beginning, without end and natural; and that the human instinct and propensity to undertake action and consume emanates from this only." Simultaneously, he exhorts men to abjure this dreaming tendency. Several doubts arise about this assertion too. The first is that if something is untrue or unreal, how can it be without beginning and without end i.e., eternal and natural. And if the imagination is a natural tendency, then human nature and instinct based on that too is bound to be natural. If this happens to be the cause of all human action and tendencies, why should it be given up? That would make even the human effort and action waged to attain deliverance or liberation (*mukti* or *mokṣa*), wholly redundant.

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According to the Vedic thought, even after attaining liberation the soul retains its natural consciousness, and does not shed that to become Brahma. Therefore the soul, the *jīva* too is unborn and eternal. This is what Dayanand emphasises.

***What is 'Real'?***

The Advaitists are bent upon proving that the universe is false – only a mirage, an illusion. Before agreeing or disagreeing with their proposition, it needs to be ascertained how the real existence is defined, or what should be deemed as real existence.

The Advaitists themselves hold that any entity or element or phenomenon that is not affected by time, to be more specific by any of the three phases or states of time, is the real eternal existence. They deem Brahma as the only one such entity. They also accept that since the universe, is transitional, transformational and finite in various forms and phenomena, it acts as a temporary veil (*vivarta*) between the *jīva* and the Brahma. But as soon as the soul, the *jīva* attains full knowledge of Brahma i.e., directly experiences the Brahma, this veil of māyā gets removed, and the worldly existence becomes a nullity or non-existent. Yet, the hard fact remains that even in the case of such a person, the minimum basic physical requirements like space , light, air, water and food, continue, and are possible only through the worldly existence. If the world ceases to exist after one attains Brahmahood, why does the universe still continue all through? Another puzzle that haunts the mind is that many a soul must have reached that position, the Brahmahood, at some point of time in the past, but the world never came to a stop.

***The Correct Vedic Position***

The correct Vedic position is that the universe is transitional or subject to change, while the Brahma is not. Therefore, Īśvara (Brahma), the soul (*jīva*) and the universe have their own different traits; and exist as separate entities with their respective traits or nature (*svabhāva* and *swarūpa*). Actually, the existence of the *jīva* and that of the universe provide the proof of the existence of Brahma, the Ultimate Infinite Unchangeable Reality. Therefore too, their existence has to be accepted as a reality. As the *jīva* gets associated with the physical bodies and *Sansāra* assume certain forms, they both cannot be Brahma, who does not assume any form. If He assumes a form, immediately He becomes subject to change and finiteness, which He is not. By the Advaitic principle then he also should be unreal. But He is always changeless. Similarly, no person, even after attaining Brhamajñāna, has ever been or ever can be capable of creating or running or destroying the universe, which only the Brahma can do. That is the difference between the three.

Shankarāchārya himself says *Vastutantram Jñānam*, which means that understanding the structure or formation of objects is the real knowledge. But simultaneously he holds that all the objects have no existence, or that all these are unreal. One may ask: how can the knowledge of the unreal be real – the Jñāna? He himself says that deeming the worldly objects as real, is ignorance. How can then knowing the structure of objects be knowledge – in his own words – *Vastutantram*

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*jñānam*? This is an obvious contradiction. Swami Dayanand has cited numerous Sūtras from the Vedānta Darśana itself to squarely rebut the Shankaran Advaita principle of *Brahma satya jaganmithyā* and has arrived at the right logical conclusions that are in perfect conformity with the original Vedic view. A list of these along with other relevant references has been appended herewith.[22]

Some scholars in recent years have tried to justify and validate Shankara's tenets by applying an entirely new interpretation to his terminology. For example, they interpret *māyā* as the limiting power of Brahma, and not the limited power, as is generally understood. They say that when Brahma creates human beings, He limits their knowledge, perception and vision, which they call ignorance or *ajñāna*. Similarly, they define *mithyā* as transient and impermanent, and not as false or unreal, or illusory. They also allege that Shankara has been not only misinterpreted, but also misconstrued. They cite the Shankaran phrase *Vastutantram jñānam*, also quoted earlier, to prove that Shankara was a realist philosopher. Even if this is accepted, the question remains: how can the *jīva* and Brahma be one? The second important issue is: who is responsible for misinterpreting and misconstruing Shankara – the Neo-Vedāntists pretending to be his followers, or the others including Swami Dayanand, who even doubts if Shankara was convinced of the theory himself? Thirdly, one may also say that these are mere afterthoughts on the philosophy having been questioned and thrashed threadbare by Swami Dayanand!

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

**A Note by the Translator**

As already stated, for his great erudition and role as a social reformer and rejuvenator of the Vedic religion and culture, Acharya Shankara has been profusely admired by Swami Dayanand. An almost similar role has since been performed by Dayanand Saraswati himself in modern times, for which he has been dubbed as the modern Shankarāchārya by some modern Buddhists. An eminent one of these, Shri Shankaranand Shastri was my father Late Raghuvir Singh Shastri's classmate at College of Oriental Languages, Lahore during mid 1930s and a good friend. So, I have been personally privy to this observation of his. Readers may recall that Shankarāchārya has been called a covert Buddhist by some scholars. Another coincidence is that Shankaranand Shastri's first name is Shankara. Yet another, that Swami Dayanand's own family name was Mool Shankar. Maybe it is all Īśvariya māyā of re-enacting the universal order time and again, reminding us of the famous saying: "History repeats itself", in a way validating the concept of *Punarjanma* staunchly believed in, by all Indian religions including Buddhism and Jainism. What a UNANIMITY in DIVERSITY!

1. S.N. Dasgupta, 1922, *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, Cambridge University Press, London, p. 422, "I do not know of any Hindu writer previous to Gauḍapāda who attempted to give an exposition of the monistic doctrine (apart from the Upaniṣads), either by writing a commentary as did Shankara, or by writing an independent work as did Gauḍapāda", says Dasgupta.
2. *Mādhyamika Kārikās* (Revised by H.N. Chaterjee, 1957), Culcutta.
   न सन्नासन्न सदसन्न चाप्यनुभयात्मकम्। चतुष्कोटिविनिर्मुक्तं तत्त्वं माध्यमिका विदुः।।,
3. Acharya Gauḍapāda, *Māṇḍūkya Kārikās, Alātaśantiprakaraṇa*, 83-84, Satsahitya Prakashan Trust, Mumbai, p. 273.
   नास्ति नास्त्यस्ति नास्ति नास्तीति वा पुनः। चलस्थिरोभयाभावैरावृणोत्येष बालिशः।।

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कोप्यश्चतस्र एतास्तु ग्रहैमासां सदावृतः। भगवानाभिरस्पृष्टो येन दृष्टः स सर्वदृक्।।

4. *Bhāskarabhāshya*, 1.4.25;
विगीतं विच्छिन्नमूलं महायानिक बौद्धगाथितं मायावादं व्यावर्णयन्तो लोकान् व्यामोहयन्ति।
Cf. *Ibid.*, 2.2.29; ये तु बौद्धमतावलम्बिनो मायावादिनस्तेऽप्यनेन न्यायेन सूत्रकारेणैव निरस्ता वेदितव्याः।
5. Devendranath Mukhopadhyaya, 2050 Vikrami, *Swami Dayanand Saraswati kā Jivan Charitra*, Govindram Hasanand, Delhi, pp. 196-197.
6. Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati, 2005, *Satyarth Prakash*, Vaidik Pustkalaya, Dayanand Ashram, Kesarganj, Ajmer, p. 342.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 349-350.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 340-341.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 341.
10. Swami Vidyanand Saraswati's article *Advaitavāda* in *Dharma and Sanskriti*, (ed. Yogeshwar Dev and Deepchander Nirmohi, 1984), Arya Samaj, Bara Bazar, Panipat, p. 337.
11. *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, 3.14.1; सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म तज्जलानिति शान्त उपासीत।
12. *Pañcadaśī*, 10.1; परमात्माऽद्वयानन्दपूर्णः पूर्वं स्वमायया। स्वयमेव जगद्भूत्वा प्राविशत् जीवरूपतः।।
13. Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati, *op. cit.*, pp. 348-349.
14. See the following shlokas
जीवेशौ च विशुद्धा चित् विभेदस्तु तयोर्द्वयोः। अविद्या तच्चितोर्योगः षडस्माकमनादयः।।
कार्योपाधिरयं जीवः कारणोपाधिरीश्वरः। कार्यकारणतां हित्वा पूर्णबोधोऽवशिष्यते।।
15. Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati, *op. cit.*, pp. 347.
16. Swami Satyanand Saraswati, 2040 Vikrami, *Brahmasūtra Shankarabhāshya*, 1.3.1; Govindmath, Varanasi, p. 200. अविद्याकृतं कार्यप्रपंचम्।
*Ibid.*, 2.1.14, p. 365; एकत्वमेवैकं पारमार्थिकं ... मिथ्याज्ञानविजृम्भितं च नानात्वम्।
Cf. Madhusudan Saraswati, 1937, *Advaitsiddhi*, Nirnaya Sagar Press, Bombay, p. 238; अज्ञानं तदुपाश्रित्य ब्रह्मकारणमुच्यते।
*Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, Advait Ashram, Publication Department, Culcutta; चित्तमूलो विकल्पोऽयं चिन्ताभावे न कश्चन।
17. Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati, *op. cit.*, p. 342
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 342-34.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 346.
20. S. Radhakrishnan, 1989, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, p. 570.
21. *Brahma Sūtra*, 2.2.21
22. नेतरोऽनुपपत्तेः 1.1.16; भेदव्यपदेशाच्च 1.1.17; विशेषणभेदव्यपदेशाभ्यां च नेतरौ 1.2.22; अन्तस्तद्धर्मोपदेशात् 1.1.20; भेदव्यपदेशाच्चान्यः 1.1.21; गुहां प्रविष्टावात्मानौ हि तद्दर्शनात् 1.2.11; अनुपपत्तेस्तु न शारीरः 1.2.3; कर्मकर्त्तृव्यपदेशाच्च 1.2.4; अन्तर्याम्यधिदैवादिषु तद्धर्मव्यपदेशात् 1.2.18; शारीरश्चोभयेऽपि हि भेदेनैनमधीयते 1.2.20; जगद्व्यापारवर्जं प्रकरणादसंनिहितत्त्वाच्च 4.4.17

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# CHAPTER 36

# Manusmriti: Varṇa and the Caste

*Surender Kumar*

In his own time, Lord Buddha was the initiator of a revolutionary social reform, but he was not a scholar of the Vedas. Saint Kabir dedicated his life to social reform, but he himself had been denied the opportunity to study, by a discriminatory society. What sets Rishi Dayanand apart is the fact that along with being an ardent social reformer, he was also a profound scholar of the Vedas. While on the one hand he fought against the caste system, untouchability, the distinction between high and low, injustice, illiteracy, ignorance and superstition, on the other hand, he removed the religious distortions brought into Hindu religion in the name of the Vedas and shāstras. Dayanand expounded the true spirit of the Vedas and shāstras with logical explanations and convincing illustrations. This paper seeks to study his exposition of Manusmriti and the social order described in it. While taking the view of the Vedic tradition and history to analyse Rishi Dayanand's interpretation, I will also discuss the statements of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, generally considered to be a strong critic of Manu and Manusmriti, which support the views of Rishi Dayanand.

***Manusmriti: An Authentic Shāstra***

In Indian literature, Manusmriti has been accorded high importance after the Vedas. Manu Swayambhuva is considered to be the author of Manusmriti or *Mānavadharmashāstra.* The following statement, found both in the Taitiriya Samhitā and Tāṇḍya Mahābrāhmaṇa, eloquently expresses the importance of Manu: *Manurvai yatkinca avadat tad bhaiṣajam* मनुर्वै यत्किञ्च अवदत् तद् भैषजम्[1] i.e., whatever Manu has said is beneficial like medicine. Dayanand, citing this eulogistic statement of the Samhitā and Brāhmaṇa grantha at the Kashi Discourse, not only gave Manusmriti high

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importance but also considered it the only one among the Smritis to be ancient, authentic and worth-reading. He mentions:

*Manusmṛtyādīnyapi vedamūlāni santi, tasmāttesāmapi prāmāṇyamasti,*
*na tu vedaviruddhānāṁ vedāsiddhānāṁ ceti.*[2]

i.e., Manusmriti and other such works are also rooted in the Vedas and as such are authentic. Those works that go against the Vedas or are not supported by them are inauthentic.

It must be pointed out that 'the interpolated shlokas and the Smritis not in consonance with the Vedas' have been declared unworthy of reading by Dayanand, in Ṛgvedādibhashyabhūmikā.[3] This has been reiterated in the third Samullas of Satyarth Prakash.

Rishi Dayanand's writings bear the spirit of this great work. How important and authentic did Dayanand consider Manusmriti can be realised from the fact that after the Vedas he has made this book the basis of his work. He has cited 514 shlokas or their excerpts from Manusmriti more than 750 times in his book in support of his arguments. Besides, at over a dozen places he has considered Manusmriti an authentic source in matters of religion, politics, education, conduct, duty and rituals.

If we take into account three factors in regard to Manu and Manusmriti, the social order as really outlined in it, becomes obvious. These are: (1) the author of Manusmriti and his period, (2) the subject of Manusmriti, and (3) interpolations as well as research on it.

## THE AUTHOR OF MANUSMRITI AND HIS PERIOD

The period of Manu determined by Dayanand varies considerably from the one upheld by the western scholars, who look upon the traditional truth as untrue and disregard the related evidence. Traditionally, the whole Vedic and Indian literature upholds, as does Dayanand, Manusmriti or *Mānavashāstra* to be a composition of Manu Swayambhuva and its period, the very dawn of civilisation. Dayanand writes: *etaddeśaprasūtasya* (एतद्देशप्रसूतस्य) - "This Manusmriti which belongs to the beginning of creation is its proof."[4] Some western writers[5] and their Indian followers hold the period of the composition of Manusmriti to be 185-100 B.C. in the age of the Brahman king, Pushyamitra Sung.

Before arriving at a conclusion about the periodisation, the mentality, the objective, and the style of these western writers may be discussed. The British, to fulfil their political and religious objectives, deliberately neglected the many millennia old Indian history and literature, and merely one hundred fifty years ago propagated new concepts about them. Indian history was distorted to suit their purposes. To deny the status of antiquity to Indian civilisation and culture, historical events and persons were dubbed as myths. Max Müller has himself admitted that the period assigned to the Vedas and Vedic literature is mere guess work. Later he expressed his inability to assign them a period.[6] Still we consider the much later period of 185-100 B.C. given to this ancient book by the westerners, authentic and the traditional Indian concept in this

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regard, inauthentic.[7] The Indian concept of millions of years old human existence and a billion and ninety seven crore years old *Srishti Samvat* was made fun of as a figment of imagination by the western writers. However, discoveries in the fields of archaeology, linguistics, geography and astronomy have lent weight to the Indian traditional beliefs and concepts in these matters. *India in Greece* traces the ancestry of the ancient Greeks to Manu Bovashwat (Vaivashwat) and considers the symbol of sun found in the pyramids to be his symbol.[8] Archaeological discoveries made in India and Turkey determine the period of these Vedic relics to be 15 thousand B.C.[9] Such discoveries lend credit to the traditional Indian belief about the period of Manusmriti.

The entire ancient Indian literature refers to Manu Swayambhuva as the author of Manusmriti. The Valmiki Rāmāyaṇa cites many shlokas of Manusmriti in the name of Manu,[10] and refers to the seventh Manu, Vaivaswat. In the Taitiriya Samhitā, Brāhmaṇa grantha and the Nirukta by Yāska, there are references to Manu and the succeeding Manus. In the Brāhmaṇa granthas there are several shlokas which have been taken verbatim from Manu,[11] and several others echo him. Acharya Yāska determines the period of Manu as Visarga, i.e., the earliest period of human civilisation- *Mithunānāṁ visargādau manuḥ svāyambhuvo'bravīt* (3.4)[12] This shows that by that time, Manu's scripture had come into existence and writers accepted his dictum as *pramāṇa* (authoritative pronouncement). This very period finds mention in the Mahābhārata, Purāṇas and Sanskrit literary works, which carry several shlokas found in the Manusmriti. We also find the history of Manu and his descendants in these early works.[13] There is another proof which nullifies the period of 185-100 B.C. assigned by the western writers to Manusmriti. In the play, *Pratima Nataka* by Bhāsa, who belonged to a period earlier than that of Kālidās, there is a speech by Rāvana who says – *Adhīye mānavīyaṁ dhrmaśāstram* (79)[14] i.e., 'I am reading the scripture of Manu.' Since Bhāsa's period is considered to be 500-300 B.C., Manu and his work cannot be that of the Sung period.

Some scholars put forward the view that 185-100 B.C. is the period of the later version of Manusmriti, but even this does not hold good. The western scholars have assigned sufficiently longer periods to denote the early and the later versions of Vedic literature and scriptures. For example, Brāhmaṇa granthas have been given the period between 4000-1100 B.C., the Rāmāyaṇa text 600-200 B.C., Nirukta 800-700 B.C. and the period of Mahābhārata text has been put at 1400 B.C. or in some accounts as 500-150 B.C. Such an elongated time-frame should also have been given to Manusmriti and its period should have been put between 4000-100 B.C.[15] It is not possible otherwise, to account for the references to this book by writers and books belonging to a period earlier than 200 B.C.

In the traditional chronological account, Manu has been assigned a very early place. Brahmā has been called the *Ādipuruṣa*, that is, the earliest one. Another name of Brahmā is Swayambhu. Manu was the son (in some accounts the grandson) of Brahmā. For this reason, he was called Swayambhuva. The succeeding thirteen Manus, other kings and sages came after him. This places the period of Manu Swayambhuva thousands of years back. The western historian Pargiter[16] has tried to give a chronology of these early Indian personages. According to him the period of Manu Vaivaswat, who

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was the seventh Manu, was 3100 B.C. and therefore, his predecessor Manu Swayambhuva, naturally belonged to a much earlier period. Thus Manusmriti, being a work of that Manu, must be assigned a period much earlier than that being given to it by the western scholars.

Let us to look at the period of Manu and Manusmriti from the angle of social history. All social historians as well as Dr. Ambedkar agree that till the period of the Mahābhārata, the basis of social order and education was *Varṇa Vyavasthā*, the order of *varṇas*. Rishi Dayanand also says that by this time distortions had begun to creep in, yet the basis of social structure was *varṇa* which was based on *karma*, the vocation one chose, and not birth, as it later became. The Mahābhārata and the Gita, declare that the *varṇa* is to be determined by *karma* – *cāturvarṇyaṁ mayā sṛṣṭaṁ guṇakarmavibhāgaśaḥ.*[17] Dr. Ambedkar holds that till the time of Lord Buddha the concept of caste had not acquired a rigid form, and there was an intermingling of and social interaction between all *varṇas*. Social history confirms the fact that caste system based on birth came into existence during the period of the Mahābhārata, gained force by the period of Buddha and became rigid by the time of the Sungs. Manu and Manusmriti belong to a period much earlier than that of the Mahābhārata. Thus the caste system did not exist during the period of Manu. This helps us conclude that the shlokas related to the caste system in Manusmriti were not written by Manu but were interpolated much later when the system had gained a stranglehold on the Indian society.

***The Opinion of Dr. Ambedkar***

Though Ambedkar followed the western writers in several contexts, in regard to Manu and his period he concurred with the traditional Indian view. Some of his statements show that he respected Manu, who as per the traditional accounts and in the eyes of Dayanand was the creator of Manusmriti. He admits that in the ancient Indian history, Manu was a name greatly honoured.[18]

Dr. Ambedkar considered the period of Manu or Manus, the most ancient. In his book, *Who were the Shudras* he mentions that the son of Paivjan, King Sudas was a descendant of Bharat and was a Shudra. Citing two shlokas from the Bhagavata Purana, he says that Sudas was a descendant of Manu Swayambhuva. This shows that Sudas belonged to a mighty dynasty.[19] He pronounces, "Shudras belonged to *Surya Vansha* of the Aryans. Among the Indian Aryans, Shudras belonged to the Kshatriya *Varṇa.*"[20] He elaborates, "Sudas belonged to the 50th generation of Ikshavasu. Thus, he was from the dynasty of Manu and Ikshavasu. If Sudas was a Shudra, all these kings were also Shudras."[21] Ambedkar thus accords a very high place to Manu and also puts him in the earliest period of Indian history. How could Ambedkar, who held Manu to be the forefather of the Shudras, have considered him to be their opponent?

This shows that the western writers became so one-sided in their approach to Manu and Manusmriti that they completely ignored the references to Manu and his lineage found in the Taitiriya Samhitā, Brāhmaṇa granthas, Mahābhārata and Purāṇas. This resulted in their ascribing Manusmriti a period which is very late and does not match with the evidence found in books belonging to an earlier period. The Vedas are regarded as the earliest creations belonging to the very dawn of civilisation. Manu

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derives his principles from the Vedas. It is only logical to conclude that Manu belonged to a period after the Vedas but earlier than that of the Brāhmaṇa granthas.

## THE SUBJECT OF MANUSMRITI

In deciding the real social order as described in the Manusmriti, it is essential to examine its contents closely. What emerges from the internal evidence and a close study of its subject is that Manu is talking of a social order based on *varṇa*, the order of *karma* or one's vocation, and not *jāti*, an order based on birth.

In the very beginning of Manusmriti, the sages ask Manu to describe the *varṇāshrama dharma*, the order and the duty of the different *varṇas* – *Sarvavarṇānāṁ... dhramān naḥ vaktumarhasi*[22] i.e., 'You are capable of describing the dharma of different *varṇas* to us'. Responding to the request of the sages Manu says, *varṇadharmān nibodhata* (वर्णधर्मान् निबोधत) i.e., Listen to the *dharma* – what is proper – to *varṇas*. He concludes his discourse with the word '*varṇa*' – *Eṣa dharmavidhiḥ kṛtsnaścāturvarṇyasya kīrtitaḥ*.[23] The first chapter of Manusmriti describes only four *varṇas*, and thus clarifies the original concept of the social order. Any deviation from it must have resulted from interpolations in some later period, because it goes against very concept of the order of society as Manu sees it.

While describing an important subject, Manu puts it both at the beginning and end of the discourse. This is so with his description of the *varṇa-vyavasthā*. The whole discourse is woven round the system of four *varṇas*. There is no reference to a social system based on *jati*, the birth-determined order. Manu says – *caturṇāmapi varṇānāṁ... strīvivāhān nibodhata*,[24] which means. "Listen to the marriage system of the four *varṇas*." He adds, *dehaśuddhiṁ pravaksyāmi... caturṇāmapi varṇānām*,[25] meaning "I will describe the kinds of purification of the body for the four *varṇas*." He talks of: *cāturvarṇyaṁ... catvārś-cāśramāḥ*[26] i.e., four *varṇas* and four *āshramas*, or *varṇāpetam... āryarūpami-vānāryam*[27] i.e., the Anāryas untrained in *varṇas* who live like the Aryas. We come across references to *varṇas* again and again in this work. How could the writer have written shlokas that go against his own pronouncements? Obviously, those shlokas which refer to a birth-determined social order were interpolated by others.

## INTERPOLATIONS IN MANUSMRITI AND MAHARSHI DAYANAND

### *Commentaries on Manusmriti*

There have been numerous commentators of Manusmriti prior to Swami Dayanand. The commentaries belonging to very early period are lost to us. Among the commentaries of the medieval period, the earliest one is that by Medhātithi (900 A.D.). Later commentaries, in chronological order, are those by Bharuchi (1050 A.D.), Govindraj (1000 A.D.), Kulluk Bhatt (1200 A.D.), Raghavanand (1300 A.D.) and Sarvangya Narayan (1400 A.D.). None of them thought that there were or admitted to any interpolations in the original text of Manusmriti, as all these commentators were under the deep influence of the caste system. They simply wrote commentaries on the

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text that had come to them. That is why they failed to account for the contradictory elements in the text.

***Swami Dayanand's Contribution***

It was Swami Dayanand, who, in his commentary, pointed out the interpolations in Manusmriti. A profound thinker, he realised that the text of Manusmriti available in the nineteenth century contained shlokas that were not only contradictory to the context and style of the book, but were also against Manu's pronounced adherence to the Vedic values. All this, he realised, had destroyed the uniformity of the text. Being a great authority on *dharma*, a composer of the Dharmashāstra and a profound analyst of the constitution of society, Manu could not have committed such lapses in his book. So Dayanand focused his attention on the interpolations in the text and brought them to the notice of the readers and scholars. He writes, "Let us consider the condition of the scripture of Manu now. As a milkman enhances the quantity of milk by adding water to it and misleads the buyer, so has *Mānav Dharmashāstra* been tampered with. There are many misleading interpolations in it. They are actually not composed by Manu."[28] He has termed "the interpolated shlokas and the Smriti granthas not in consonance with it" unworthy of reading.[29] Rishi Dayanand has pointed out the interpolated shlokas, such as – *prokṣitaṁ bhakṣayen mānsam* (5.27), *na mānsabhakṣaṇe doṣaḥ...* (5.56), *avidvān... brāhmaṇo daivataṁ mahat, śmaśāneṣvapi tejasvī, evaṁ... sarvathā brāhmaṇāḥ pūjyāḥ* (9.317-319). Citing these shlokas, he has called them interpolations by selfish Brahmans.[30]

Interpolations in ancient texts are not unusual, and in the case of Manusmriti, seem very plausible. Due to the birth-determined caste system taking deep roots in the Indian society over the centuries following Manu, certain segments of the society acquired power and privilege. They naturally wanted to perpetuate their position, and to do so they needed the authority of the scriptures. So with the changing values of the Indian society and to serve the purpose of its privileged segments, interpolations were made from time to time in Manusmriti. Dayanand took no time to realise this and methodically pointed out the interpolations.

***Further Proof of Interpolations in Manusmriti***

The seven yardsticks applied to determine interpolations in an ancient text are:

1. *Prakaraṇa Virodha* (against the case/theme)
2. *Prasaṅga Virodha* (against the context)
3. *Paraspara Virodha* (contradictions in different contexts in the text)
4. *Avantara Virodha* (inner contradictions within the same context)
5. *Shailī Virodha* (against the style)
6. *Punarukti* (repetition)
7. *Veda Virodha* (against the Vedas)

If one comes across a passage which does not match with the context, or which appears to contradict the theme of the text, it obviously could not have been originally written by the writer. Mutually contradicting passages also point to the same thing. Similarly, if the language and style do not conform to the language and style of the work, the passage in all probability was inserted later on.

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That the original text of Manusmriti was tampered with, is clearly proven by a study of the inner evidence of the text and a scrutiny of the available manuscripts. The following facts make the interpolations, obvious:

1. The manuscripts of Manusmriti that have come down to us contain differing number of shlokas as well as parts of the text. This lends weight to the conclusion that handwritten manuscripts were tampered with.
2. By the time of the commentary by Medhātithi (900 A.D.), the text of Manusmriti had got a fixed form. Despite this, in the commentary by Kulluk Bhatt (1200 A.D.), one finds that 170 shlokas have been interpolated in it. These shlokas, however, did not mix well with the text. That is why in the Chawkhamba edition of the commentary by Kulluk these shlokas have been given a different numbering.
3. Dr. Kewal Motvani has revealed the interpolation in Manusmriti through archaeological evidence. During the Japanese invasion of China in 1932, the Great Wall of China was breached at a place by a mortar attack. A casket full of Chinese manuscripts was recovered from there. Sir Auguts Fritz George brought it to a library in London. The manuscripts were read by scholars of the Chinese language led by Prof. Anthony Graeme. One of those manuscripts recorded that in India there was a book by Manu written in Vedic Sanskrit which was ten thousand years old. It contained 680 shlokas.[31] Today the number of shlokas in Manusmriti is 2685, out of which 1214 shlokas are original while 1471 are interpolated.
4. That there are interpolations in Manusmriti and other Sanskrit literary texts has been accepted not only by the followers of Swami Dayanand but also by many Indian scholars and some western writers. Among the western scholars, the names of Max Müller, J. Jolly, Wooler and McDonald are prominent, while the Indian scholars include commentators like Vishwanath Narayan Mandalik, Jagannath Raghunath Dharpure, Hargovind Shastri, Jayantkrishna Harikrishnadev and others. This has also been accepted by the likes of Mahatma Gandhi, Aurobindo and Ambedkar. We can see interpolations in Valmiki Rāmāyaṇa as well, which have led to its three versions known as Southern, North-western and Gaudiya. Similarly, the original *Jaya* by Vyasa took the shape of the Mahābhārata containing one lakh verses. These examples prove the practice of interpolation in ancient Sanskrit texts. This has created a false and distorted image of Indian history, society and culture. Dayanand did commendable work by pointing out such interpolations in Manusmriti, responsible for giving a false impression of the Vedic civilisation and culture. Highlighting the interpolations and inspiring research into this field is a great contribution of Dayanand to the Indian intellectual tradition.

***The Original Form of the Social Structure Propounded by Manusmriti***

The most important as well as the most controversial part of the social structure contained in Manusmriti is *varṇavyavasthā*, the system of *varṇas*. As pointed out earlier, the scripture of Manu describes four *varṇas*, namely, Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra. The scholars took *varṇa* to be a 'birth determined' system. Dayanand, by citing dozens of shlokas from Manusmriti, denoted that *varṇa* as described by Manu, stood for

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'*karma* based' structure – that is, *varṇa* determined by the vocation one chooses and not by the family in which one is born. Dayanand's prominent pronouncements include:

a) "Shudra, Vaishya, Kshatriya and Brahman – this social order can be determined by merit, occupation and nature. This was the system prevalent among the ancient Aryans, who did not determine the *varṇas* by birth."[32]
b) The shloka – *śūdro brāhmaṇatāmeti*[33] has been quoted five times. In Satyarth Prakash, he writes, "The men and women who fall into whatever *varṇa* should be counted in that *varṇa*."[34]
c) Rishi Dayanand writes, after explaining the *karma*-based *varṇa*, "I have described in brief, the features and vocations of the different *varṇas*. One will have to be given the right of the *varṇa* into which one falls on the basis of one's *karma*. By such a system everyone will move towards progress. Those who belong to higher *varṇas* will fear that if their children do not acquire merit, they will slide into Shudra *varṇa*, and the children will also be afraid that if they do not acquire education and merit they will become Shudras. Those belonging to lower *varṇas*, on the other hand, will aspire to move into higher *varṇas*."[35]
d) Dayanand raises a pertinent question before those who take *varṇa* as something determined by birth. The Rishi asks them what their response would be if a Brahman becomes a Christian or a Muslim. Would they still call him a Brahman? Obviously not. This in itself is a proof that it is one's *karma* which ultimately decides one's *varṇa* and not one's birth into a particular *varṇa*.[36] He reiterates, "If it is said that a man becomes a Brahman by his birth then how is it that his Brahmanhood is lost if he starts behaving in a wayward manner unlike a Brahman? This proves that Brahmanhood is not attained by birth but by one's action. When Aryavarta was a glorious state, this was its system of *varṇa*.[37]

Maharshi Manu derived the concept of the *varṇavyavasthā* from the Vedas,[38] and Rishi Dayanand derived his concept from both these sources. It is on the basis of these authorities that Dayanand advocated the right to education and religious practices for both women and Shudras. Arya Samaj gave them the opportunity to study the Vedas which they were denied earlier, and treated these downtrodden segments of Hindu society at par with the others.

***Dr. Ambedkar's Observations***

Dr. Ambedkar has appreciated the *varṇavyavasthā* based on *karma* and supported Dayanand's views on this. He writes that the Vedic concept of *varṇa* is that a person should adopt a profession suited to his natural abilities. He further holds that the Vedic system of *varṇa* expounded by Dayanand and some others, is rational and not detestable. He does not accept the view that that birth is the deciding factor in assigning a one's place in the society. Only the ability of a person should be the deciding factor.[39] Thus Ambedkar also supports Manu's concept of *varṇa*, and frees Manu or all Manus of the charge of creating the caste system. In this regard he says that Manu did not create the system of *jāti* (caste), nor could he do so.[40]

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At another place, Ambedkar writes that the four-*varṇa* system of the Vedic period was better than the caste system. It had two positive features which Brāhmaṇism discarded to serve its own purpose. First, *varṇas* were not rigorously segregated. A man of one *varṇa* could marry in another *varṇa*. Secondly, a man of one *varṇa* ate together with the people of other *varṇas*. Both these factors kept people of all *varṇas* united. He reiterates that during the Buddhist period, the four-*varṇa* system was a liberal one. A man of one *varṇa* could marry a woman of another *varṇa*. There are several examples to prove this feature.[41]

Importantly, Ambedkar states that Shudras were allowed to study the Vedas. There were certain Shudras who had attained the status of a rishi (sage). The example of the sage Kavas Elus is remarkable.[42] Such statements by Ambedkar show that there is no conflict between his views and the concept of social order as originally propounded by Manu.

## THE MEANING OF VARṆA AND THE SYSTEM OF DETERMINING VARṆAS

The word, '*varṇa*' itself throws light on the form of *varṇavyavasthā*. Nirukta states that it is derived from the root – *varṇaḥ vṛṇoteḥ*,[43] which means – that which is adopted. A man could adopt a *varṇa* as per his aptitude and training. Dayanand explains that it is called *varṇa* because it is bestowed upon one on the basis of one's *karma* and ability.[44] What is adopted on the conjunction of ability and vocation is called *varṇa*.[45]

The option for *varṇa* was made at the entry to the gurukula, but it was bestowed upon one by the acharya (teacher), only after the completion of one's education. In a way, it was similar to the modern system of giving a particular degree to a student after the successful completion of education. Following Manusmriti, Dayanand writes, "The period of study for all *varṇas* is brahmacharya."[46] He further says, "The *varṇas* should be determined after the completion of education and on the basis of ability at the age of sixteen for a woman and twenty-five for a man."[47] At another place he says, "This is known for certain that the entitlement for a *varṇa* can be assessed properly at the age of twenty-five because by that time a man's mind grows mature and so his abilities can be assessed properly and a *varṇa* may be allotted to him."[48]

### *Becoming Dvija*

*Dvija* means, the one born twice. About becoming *Dvija*, Dayanand writes, "One who is born of educated parents and gets a second birth through education at the hands of a teacher becomes *dvija*."[49]

Manusmriti elaborates upon this concept. One's birth in this world is only a physical birth. One is truly born only when one gets a life of mind and education at the hands of a teacher. Its initiation is marked by the upanayana sanskar – *aupanayaniko vidhi... utpattivyanjakaḥ*[50] After getting this 'brahma janma' one gets education and is given a *varṇa*. *Ācāryastvasya yāṁ Jātim...utpādayati sāvitryā*[51] - only then one becomes a *dvija*, i.e., Brahman, Kshatriya or Vaishya. A person who does not get this '*brahma janma*'

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remains 'ekjati' or Shudra. Thus being a Shudra means, as per the Vedas, a person without intellectual training or education.

All this underlines the fact that Manusmriti does not consider birth as the determining factor of *varṇa* or jāti. Had this been so, there would have been no role of a teacher in conferring a *varṇa* upon a person. Manusmriti uses the term 'jāti', not to denote birth-determined caste, but simply in the sense of its literal meaning of 'birth'. Examples of such usage include – *jātyandhabadhirau*[52] which means deaf and blind since birth, or *jātiṁ smarati paurvikīm*[53] i.e., birth remembers its previous existence, or *dvijātiḥ* (द्विजाति:) i.e., having two births.

***The Systems of Varṇa and Caste are Contradictory***

A scrutiny of the concepts of *varṇa* and jāti reveals that the two are contradictory and not synonymous. While the former is vocation-determined, the latter is birth-determined. The former provides for a choice, while the latter is rigid. *Varṇa* can be changed, but one cannot change one's caste. Dr. Ambedkar has also admitted this fact at several places. He says, "The basic principle of *varṇa* is completely different from the basic principle of jāti. They are not merely basically different but basically contradictory. The first one is based on a person's merit."[54] He adds, "*Varṇa* is not hereditary from the point of view of either post or vocation, while *jāti* is. In it a son inherits them from his father."[55]

***The Change of Varṇa***

If a man who has entered into *varṇa* wanted to change his *varṇa* at a later stage, he could do so by acquiring the merits of the desired *varṇa*. This change of *varṇa* had to be sanctioned by an educational institution or a Dharma Sabha constituted by the ruler. A shloka from the *Manusmriti* denotes that the change of *varṇa* was not unusual in the Vedic times –

*Śūdro brāhmaṇatāmeti, brāhmaṇaścaiti śūdratām.*
*Kṣatriyājjātamevaṁ tu vidyādvaiśyāttathaiva ca.*[56]

i.e., on the basis of merit, ability and *karma*, a Brahman becomes a Shudra and a Shudra, a Brahman. Similarly, the *varṇas* of Kshatriya and Vaishya can also be changed. Dayanand has quoted this shloka five times in his works. There are dozens of such shlokas in *Manusmriti* which refer to the provisions for demoting a *dvija* to the status of a Shudra if he deviates from the path suitable to his *varṇa*. Similarly, it was possible for a Shudra to get elevated to the status of a *dvija* by acquiring merit and ability.

***Historical Evidence of the Change of Varṇas***

In a '*karma*' based *varṇa vyavasthā*, one could change one's *varṇa*. Dayanand has highlighted this fact with the examples of Satyakām Jābāl, Vishwamitra, Matang Rishi, Asamanjas, the son of Sagar, Karna and others. Some scholars regard these as exceptions. But there are several other examples which prove otherwise. Moreover, we do not come across any example of caste change, once the birth-determined caste

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system came into vogue. Such a change was possible only in a system which assigned a category on the basis of merit.

Some important examples of the change of *varṇa* may be cited. Three sons of the Priyvrat, the eldest son of Manu Swambhuva, had become Brahmans. The son of Vaivaswat Manu, Nabhanedist had become a Vaishya. Nara, Garg and Mahavirya, the three sons of Bharata became Brahmans. Kavas Elus, the son of a maidservant and Vatsa, the son of a Shudra, became seers and were known as rishis of the mantras of the Ṛgveda. King Viswaratha, a Kshatriya, became Brahmarshi Viswamitra. Satyakām Jābāl of an obscure family became a Brahman sage. Matang born in a Chandal family also became a sage. Born in a low family as per some accounts, Valmiki became Rishi Valmiki. The son of a *dāsī* – maidservant – Vidur became the Chief Minister of King Dhritrāshtra and was called a *mahātmā* – a great soul. Rāma and Krishna, though Kshatriyas, were called Lords and became objects of worship even for the Brahmans. On the other hand, a descendant of Sage Pulatsya, a Brahman, Rāvana became a rākshas, a demon. An ancestor of Ram, Pravriddha, had fallen down from the status of a Kshatriya. Ajmanjas, the son of Sagar, was declared a Shudra.[57]

Besides individual examples, we also come across examples of an entire tribe or a part of it, having lost its *varṇa*. Some shlokas in the Mahābhārata as well as Manusmriti refer to tribes who were Kshatriyas but since they did not follow the duties of the Kshatriyas, they were turned into Shudras:

*Śanakaistu kriyālopādimāḥ kṣatriyajātyaḥ. Vṛṣalatvaṁ gatā loke brāhmaṇādarśanena ca.*
*Pauṇḍrakāścouḍradraviḍāḥ kāmbojā yavanāḥ śakāḥ. pārdāḥ pahlavāścīnāḥ kirātāḥ daradāḥ khaśāḥ.*[58]

i.e., Since they did not perform the duties of Kshatriyas and did not observe the penance prescribed by the Brahmans, the following Kshatriya castes were called Shudras – Paundrak, Audra, Dravida, Kamboj, Yavana, Saka, Parad, Pallava, Cheen, Kirat, Darad, Khash. The Mahābhārata mentions more such communities – Mekal, Lat, Kanvasiras, Shaundik, Darv, Chaur, Shabar and Barbar.

### *The Change of Varṇa in the Opinion of Dr. Ambedkar*

Dr. Ambedkar holds that like other societies, Indian society was also divided into four *varṇas* – Brahmans or priests, Kshatriyas or warriors, Vaishyas or traders, and Shudras or artisans and labourers. This fact is particularly noticeable that a person could change his *varṇa* according to his abilities and skill. That is why *varṇas* were interchangeable.[59]

Ambedkar corroborates the details of the process of the change of *varṇa* mentioned in Manusmriti and says that this fact is proven by traditional examples given in religious literature. According to the tradition, the *varṇa* of a person was determined by a group of officials who were called Manu or Saptarshi. The Manu selected those who were eligible for becoming Kshatriya or Vaishya, and the Saptarshis selected those fit to become Brahmans. Those who were not selected under the previous categories could only become Shudras. Thus the people of various *varṇas* kept changing.[60]

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***The System of Varṇas till Mahābhārata and the Age of Buddha***

From the period of the Ṛgveda to that of the Mahābhārata, this merit-based *varṇa vyavasthā* continued. It has been said in the Gita – *cāturvarṇyaṁ mayā sṛṣṭaṁ guṇakarmavibhāgaśaḥ,*[61] that is, four-*varṇa* system has been made by me (the lord) according to the merit and actions of persons. In the Mahābhārata and the Gita, the duties of the four *varṇas* have been elaborated.[62, 63]

Even during later periods, instances of the change of *varṇa,* are found. According to J. Wilson and H.L. Rose, the Pokharna or Pushkarna Brahmans of Rajputana, Sindh and Gujarat; Pathaks of Amtara of Unnao district in U.P. and Mahavar Rajputs got elevated from lower castes to higher ones.[64]

Dayanand also describes the feature of the change of *varṇas* and says that till the period of the Mahābhārata there was amity among the people of different *varṇas.* "Till the rule of Janmejaya, the people of the four *varṇas* had social interaction and they took part in the sessions of the court of the king and the assemblies of religion and education, according to a custom. If you look at the '*Rajasūya parva*' and the '*Asvamedha parva*' in the Mahābhārata, the relationship among the four *varṇas* becomes evident."[65]

In this context Ambedkar refers to the marriage of King Santanu and a fisherwoman.[66] He has also referred to the custom of inter-caste marriages and feasting together till the age of Buddha. However, by then, the rigidity in the system had begun to manifest itself.

***The Rights and Status of the Shudras in Manu's social order***

Today the greatest resentment against Manu and Manusmriti is because of the alleged attitude of Manu towards Shudras. Manu is accused of prescribing a social order based on the birth of a person in a fixed stratum of society to which he is consigned for his whole life. The critics of Manusmriti hold that Manu called them outcastes, untouchable and worthy of utmost punishment. He deprived them of their rights to education and religious practices. Thus he treated them unfairly and pushed them into the abyss of backwardness.

These views should not, in all fairness, be attributed to Manu. What is being imputed to him was actually never said by him. are based on shlokas that were not there in the original work of Manu but were interpolated later on Manu's *varṇavyavasthā* is a merit-based system where a person has the freedom of mobility. Getting a 'second birth', a mental birth, through education one became a *dvija,* and those who remained without education or training were '*ek jāti*', having a physical birth only. They were called Shudras. In Indonesia the term is still in vogue but it does not have the stigma of untouchability. The word, *shudra* means – *śu dravati* "शु द्रवति" that is, who works at the order of his master or *śocyāṁ sthitimāpan-naḥ dravati* "शोच्यां स्थितिमापन्नः द्रवति" who remains unhappy. It was the birth-determined caste system that was responsible for the miserable condition of the Shudras.

Manu has assigned the duties of service, cooking and attending upon a guest to a Shudra. He has also instructed the master to feed his servants before taking a meal

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himself.[67] This indicates that Shudras were treated with due consideration. Dayanand too has assigned the task of cooking to Shudras.[68]

According to Manu, Shudras are Aryans and a part of the *varṇa* system. Only those who fall outside the *varṇa* system are considered non-Aryans by Manu – *varṇāpetam... anāryam.*[69] Dr. Ambedkar has accepted this concept of Manu. He writes, "The statement of the dharma shāstras that Shudras are non-Aryans is not acceptable. This is against the principle of Manu and Kautilya."[70] At another place he says, "This is unfortunate that people came to believe that Shudras were non-Aryans. The ancient literature does not give any basis for such a conclusion."[71] Again he says, "Shudras were Aryans and they followed the Aryan system of life. They were considered Aryans and till the period of Kautilya's *Arthashāstra* they were called so. Shudras were an integral and respected part of the Aryan community."[72]

Shudras were not slaves, as they were paid salaries.[73] A Shudra who was more than ninety years old was to be respected even by the people of higher *varṇas* – *mānārhaḥ śūdro'pi daśamīṁ gataḥ.*[74] Shudras were not debarred from '*dharma*' – *na dharmātpratiṣedhanam.*[75] Manu has stated that Shudras had the right to observe 'dharma'.[76] Rishi Dayanand has also conferred all religious rights on the Shudras. He has quoted a mantra from the Yajurveda in this context – *yathemāṁ vācaṁ kalyāṇīmāvadāni janebhyaḥ.... śūdrāya cāryāya...*[77] Dr. Ambedkar concurs that the Shudras had a right to study the Vedas in the early period.[78]

In Manu's legal system, minimum quantum of punishment was to be given to the Shudras while maximum punishment was reserved for the king and Brahmans –

*Aṣṭāpādyaṁ tu śūdrasya steye bhavati kilviṣam. ṣoḍaśaiva tu vaiśyasya dvātrinśatkṣatriyasya ca.*
*Brāhmaṇasya catuḥṣaṣṭiḥ pūrṇaṁ vā'pi śatam bhavet. dviguṇā vā*
*catuḥṣaṣṭistaddoṣaguṇaviddhi saḥ.*[79]

It means that, in a case of theft, if a Shudra is awarded the punishment of eight in a scale of punishment, the Vaishya should get sixteen, the Kshatriya thirty-two and the Brahman should receive sixty-four or rather a hundred or even one hundred twenty eight times the quantum of punishment. The reason is that a Brahman being knowledgeable should realise the nature and impact of his offence. Manu ordained the king not to give any relaxation in punishment, whether the culprit be an acharya, a priest or even the king's own parents. The King should not allow even a friend to go unpunished or substitute physical punishment by a fiscal punishment.[80]

The *varṇavyavasthā* got distorted and deteriorated into caste system over centuries. Evil practices, like denying Shudras the right to education, excluding them from social intermingling in marriage and feasting and making their social status hereditary, pushed them to the margins of the society. This was not the original social structure outlined by Manu. Manu is accused of perpetuating a discriminatory social system, only because of the shlokas that were interpolated by the people with vested interest in the later ages, in the original Manusmriti by Manu Swayambhuva who belonged to the earliest phase of Indian civilisation.

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    अष्टापाद्यं तु शूद्रस्य स्तेये भवति किल्विषम्। षोडशैव तु वैश्यस्य द्वात्रिंशत्क्षत्रियस्य च।। ब्राह्मणस्य चतुःषष्टिः पूर्णं वाऽपि शतं भवेत्। द्विगुणा वा चतुःषष्टिस्तद्दोषगुणविद्धि सः।।
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(Translated from Hindi to English by M.R. Verma)

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# SECTION VI
# The Vedic Belief System and Way of Life

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# CHAPTER 37

# Monotheism in the Vedas

*Sompal Shastri*

A preponderant majority of the modern scholars, especially the westerners, who are supposed to have studied the ancient Indian scriptures, believe that the concept of God enshrined in the Vedas is essentially polytheistic.[1] There should, however, be no hesitation in accepting that to a large extent, the traditional Indian scholars, the Brahmans of the post-Vedic times, have been responsible for initiating, propagating and perpetrating this perception.[2] They seem to have done this over a period of time, with the sheer objective of self aggrandisement.

## THE EMERGENCE OF POLYTHEISM

### *The Rise of Polytheism*

Like all other endeavours of human life, seeking spiritual enlightenment, or put in simple parlance, realising God, i.e., experiencing the highest ultimate reality involves a constant, consistent and persistent effort throughout one's life. In fact according to the Vedic spiritual thought and practice, one may have to strive over several life spans.

Instead of guiding the masses on the path of monotheistic Vedic spirituality, the Brahmans not only devised the polytheistic concept, but went on creating innumerous imaginary and imaged gods and goddesses, calling them *devis* and *devatās* – the deities. They did not stop at that and proclaimed numerous incarnations – the *avatāras* of these gods and goddesses. To name a few, first they created the famous trinity of Gods – *Brahmā, Viṣṇu* and *Maheṣa*, then designated *Indra, Soma, Prajāpati, Brihaspati, Vishwakarmā, Varuna, Vāyu, Yama* and so on as independent gods. Later, they added to the list, several *avatāras* like Rāma, Hanumān, Krishna, Rādhā as human gods, and almost all natural phenomena including fire, air, water, earth, celestial bodies, animals,

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serpents, rodents, birds and plants as deemed gods. This incredible list according to the Brahmans adds up to 33 crores, i.e., 330 million.[3]

In the name of rendering spirituality or the quest for spirituality, an easy and simplistic affair, the Brahmans quite ingeniously devised and designed attractive but cumbersome and seemingly mysterious forms and chores of sacrifices (*yajñās*) and worships (*pujās*) purported to propitiate these maniform gods and goddesses, which according to them help the common man tread not only the spiritual path successfully to attain *swarga* and *mukti* or *mokṣa*, but also obtain the desired mundane pleasures and possessions, health, wealth, fame and offspring. These rituals were designed intricately and mastered by the Brahmans and offered to the common man on a professional basis on payment designated as *dāna* (charity) and *dakṣiṇā* (the fee).

Thus, in due course, spirituality emerged as an organised and outsourced business for the Brahmans, Purohits, Pandās, Pujāris, soothsayers (*jyotishis)* and fortune tellers, who would prescribe various devices (*upāyas*) to ward off difficulty of any kind faced by the common man, who in turn is to mobilise certain resources and materials required for performing the various rituals. The Brahmans, called *Karmakāṇḍis*, having developed a vested interest in the whole affair, reserved the right not only of performing these rituals (*karmakāṇḍas*), but also that of studying the scriptures and their language Sanskrit for their own caste and class and monopolised it in due course.

To make the system permanent, the priestly class devised a complicated caste structure and divided the society to ensure and perpetuate their supremacy at the head of the caste pyramid. As a corollary, they barred the majority of people, except the privileged castes, who were deliberately chosen and involved to forge a hegemony and nexus of the so-called upper castes, from venturing into these intellectual undertakings. They designed such a web of rituals that there is hardly any occasion in people's life, right from birth till death, where the Brahminical services are not compulsorily warranted. Ultimately, they became the sole proprietors of spirituality; and keeping all others ignorant and dependent on the intermediation between the common man and God(s) became the Brahmans' permanent reserve and vested interest. This is how they permanently distorted the dynamic natural aptitude based *Varnavyavasthā* into a rigid birth based multi-layered caste system, that has since become the worst scourge of the Indian society.

This briefly is the background of the emergence of the concept of polytheism, which was readily borrowed by the western scholars, who obviously did not possess the appropriate knowledge of Vedic Sanskrit and the cultural moorings needed to understand the deep nuances of the Vedic scriptures and the vocables used therein. Some of them perhaps deliberately did not ever labour to decode the original sense of the Vedic terminology, as for them it was more convenient to rely on the native Indian commentator(s). Interestingly and ironically, even many of the renowned modern rational thinkers and scholars, Indian as well as foreign, have been swayed by this Brahminical manufacture, blindly upholding the idea of polytheism in the Vedas.

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***Dayanand's Challenge***

Historically, there have been several attempts by some Indian and foreign thinkers and reformers to challenge the idea and the system. But the most recent, effective and successful one had to wait till the advent of Swami Dayanand Saraswati, the founder of Arya Samaj movement, on the scene. The hallmark of Dayanand's challenge is that he seeks to meet the Brahmans on their own turf, the Vedas, which according to him have been grossly misunderstood, misconstrued and misinterpreted by them.

Dayanand gave a clarion call to go back to nowhere else but the Vedas. In order to acquire a correct and rational understanding and interpretation of the Vedas, he proposes and himself relies upon the scientific root-based (*dhātuparak*) etymology – the science of word formation enunciated by Acharya Yāska of Nirukta fame and establishes quite convincingly that the Vedas have nothing but monotheism as the singular theme running through and through all the four of them – the Ṛgveda, the Yajurveda, the Sāmaveda and the Atharvaveda. In a scholarly discourse contained in the very first chapter of Satyarth Prakash, he says that the various names of God occurring in the Vedas are only the various attributes, faculties, qualities or traits of the One God and Only One God. Having studied all the scriptures including the four Vedas, the *Brāhmaṇa granthas*, the *Upaniṣads*, the *Āraṇyaka granthas*, the *Ṣaḍ-darśanas*, the *Vyākaraṇa*, the *Purāṇas*, the *Itihāsa* i.e., the *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata* etc., he himself confesses to have got only utterly confused; and then having been taught by his great teacher Swami Virjanand Dandi at Mathura, embarked upon the 'Yāska and meditation route' to decipher the real meaning and significance of the Veda Mantras. With utmost confidence and conviction he concluded that of all the scriptures only the Vedas contain the real truth; and that the other scriptures are true only to the extent that they are Veda-conformant, and anything written therein that is repugnant to the Vedas is invalid and untrue, therefore, deserves rejection straight away.[4] Having set this as the guiding principle, he invoked and extensively quoted the Vedic Mantras to bring out the Oneness of God, the Supreme Power and completely negated the concepts of multiplicity of Gods. He also rejected the practice of idol worship and propitiation of the man-created gods for attaining worldly objects and *mokṣa* and *swarga* etc., with the intermediary help of the ritual-performing Brahmans, as pure irrational superstition.

In those times, the third and the fourth quarters of the nineteenth Century, this was deemed as wholly untenable heresy, for which Dayanand invited a huge ire of the well entrenched Brahminical order that dubbed him as an atheist and anti-Hindu. But Dayanand persisted with his effort and succeeded in convincing a sizeable section of the public to rethink and rediscover the Vedas and thereby the Monotheism enshrined therein. The reaction of the Brahmans was quite understandable as their vested interest was being hit, but even many of the western scholars, who too were jolted and nonplussed, reacted sharply. Some, however, responded positively too. So, his influence did not remain confined to within the country for long and started influencing not only the European scholars, but also a few scholars of the Mohammedan, Parsi and other religions. The first and foremost of these happens to be Prof. Max Müller of Germany, who after reading Dayanand's *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā* was compelled to change his opinion. Having been impressed and perhaps scared by the deep understanding and

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infallible logic of Dayanand, few of them alleged that he has got the idea of monotheism from Christianity and that he picked up only selected hymns from the Vedas to substantiate this as an original Vedic conception. However, on perusal of the chequered events and pursuits of Dayanand's life, this imputation seems wholly misplaced and born out of sheer envy bordering on malice. And as such, it needs to be countered with an emphatic assertion that monotheism is an original, innate, constant and consistent theme of the Vedas. To look for proof(s) of this, the only and the most appropriate course happens to be none but the one suggested by Dayanand, the recourse to the Vedas. It needs to be clarified here that in proposing to "go back to Vedas", he does not want us to go back in history and try to locate some archaeological or other such evidence, but to take a fresh and intimate look at these scriptures, which he himself has done to reach the conclusion that the truth of monotheism as encapsulated in the Vedic hymns is original and innate with eternal and universal value and relevance, bound neither by space nor time.

This article proposes to abide by the approach and invoke the intrinsic and endemic evidence contained in the Vedic hymns widely strewn and intimately sewn throughout them.

## EVIDENCE OF MONOTHEISM IN THE YAJURVEDA

With due apology to the sequence-sensitive scholars, the beginning here is sought to be made by tinkering with the established order of the Vedas, first invoking the Yajurveda, which as we know happens to be the second Veda after the Ṛgveda. The choice is a bit deliberate, as the Yajurveda is supposed to be dealing with the *Karmakāṇḍa* i.e., the Yajnās that the traditional Brahmans are most fond of using for their sacrificial rituals. Here too, only a few mantras of the 40th i.e., the concluding chapter known to contain the essence of the whole Yajurveda are being cited initially. It may not be out of place here to mention that the prime Upaniṣad, the *Īśopaniṣad* is but a commentary on this last chapter of the Yajurveda and derives its name from the very first word '*Īśā*' of the very first mantra of this chapter that carries one of the most robust, apt and comprehensive statements on the Unity of God:

*Īśā vāsyamidaṁ sarvaṁ yatkiṁca jagatyāṁ jagat,*
*Tena tyaktena bhuñjīthā mā gṛdhaḥ kasyasviddhanam.*[5]

Before looking at the full meaning of the mantra, let us understand the root-based meanings of the individual words thereof. The word 'Īśa' is derived from the root 'Īś' which means to govern, to regulate, to lord over, to own, to master etc. *āvāsyam* is related to the root '*vas*', the sense of which is to inhabit, to live in, to enter, to pervade, to permeate. *Idaṁ* is a pronoun denoting he, she, it, this, that. *Sarvaṁ* means all, everyone, everything. *Yatkiṁ ca* is whatsoever. *Jagatyāṁ jagat* – both emanate from the root *gaṁ* or *gat* signifying movement, change, transformation, conversion etc. *Tena* again is a pronoun in the third form (*Vibhakti*) that means 'by him'. *Tyaktena* is a derivative of the root *tyak* meaning release, renounce, spare. *Bhuñjīthā* is from the root *bhuñj* which means to consume, to use, to utilise etc. *Mā* means 'do not'. From the root *gṛdh* comes *gṛdhaḥ*, meaning to covet, to crave, to grab, to usurp etc. The word *kasya* is a

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form of *kaḥ*, which has a threefold connotation. It may mean 'who', or 'the Supreme Ruler' – the Prajāpati i.e., the Creator, the God, the Master, the Owner of 'the Prajā' i.e., the society, the community, the whole diverse creation, and *kaḥ* means *prajā* i.e., creation too. *Svit* or *svid* is exclamatory, prodding the humans 'to think', to imagine, to consider, to reflect etc. And *dhanam* is the wealth, the belongings, the bounties of nature, the objects of consumption etc.

Having explained the words as per Acharya Yāska's system of etymology, now a brief meaning of the mantra is as follows:

All whatever moves in this vast cosmic movement, the units in the whole, or the microcosms within the grand macrocosm – the cosmos (*idaṁ sarvaṁ yatkiṁ ca jagatyāṁ jagat*) is inhabited, pervaded, permeated and owned (*āvāsyam*) by the Supreme Power, the God (Īśā). (Humans are ordained/advised to) consume with a sense of renunciation, leaving a due share for others and save a part for sustenance and future needs, or use only that part of energy that has been released by the natural cycles and systems of production automatically (*tena tyaktena bhuñjīthā*). Do not grab others' share, do not covet or crave beyond the basic needs (*mā gṛdahḥ*), keep in mind that it belongs to Him and it belongs to the whole society, the community, even the future generations, and not to you alone (*kasya sviddhanam*), so do reflect if it is not so *(swid)*!

The mantra has a manifold message, but in the present context it clearly indicates that there is only One God, the Lord of all in the universe, Omniscient and Omnipresent! The fourth mantra of the same chapter corroborates the thought:

*Anejadekaṁ manaso javīyo nainaddev'āpnuvan pūrvamarṣat.*
*Taddhāvato'nyānatyeti tiṣṭhattasminnapo mātariśvā dadhāti.*[6]

That Supreme Power does not move, stumble, change (*Anejat*), so is unchangeable, stable and permanent, (*Ekaṁ*) the Only One. Yet runs or moves faster than even the mind (*manaso javīyo*). The human senses cannot capture and hold it (*na+enat+deva āpnuvan*) and it reaches everywhere before they (the senses) arrive (*pūrvam+arṣat*). The sense is that He, the Supreme Consciousness, the Pure Energy already and always exists beforehand or before everything everywhere. So, wherever one may go, one would find Him existing there, as nothing is without Him, rather every existence is because of Him. He surpasses all and everything else and resides in everything and energises everything everywhere (*tat+dhāvato+anyān+atyeti tiṣṭhat+tasminnapo mātariśvā dadhāti*). The word '*apaḥ*' denotes the functional or kinetic energy and '*mātariśva*', the life energy the '*prāṇa*'. Only He, the Only One, is permanent, omniscient, omnipresent and impeller as well as the propeller of all.

The next mantra restates and further elaborates the fact:

*Tadejati tannaijati taddūre tadvantike.*
*Tadantarasya sarvasya tadu sarvasyāsya bāhyataḥ.*[7]

He (*tat*) moves (*ejati*) and He (*tat*) moves not (*na+ejati*), He is far and wide (*tat+dūre*) and He is near too (*tat+u+antike*). He is inside or within everything (*tat+antarasya sarvasya*), He is outside or without all and everything (*tat+u+sarvasya+asya bāhyataḥ*). This means that He, the Supreme power is all pervasive, all permeating, present everywhere at all times.

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The sense of these two mantras is that the Supreme Conscious Pure energy subtly exists in everything, every entity – animate and or inanimate, and the energy is stationary with reference to a particular entity, but moves with the movement of that entity. So, it can be safely stated, though it is not the theme of this article, that this understanding of the mantras is totally at par with modern science, which recognises that at the subtle sub-atomic level all existence is the same. Rather, modern science is yet to find out who, or what, energises the atom or its parts. May be it is the '*Īśā*' the Supreme Power that cannot be grasped by the senses – *nainaddeva āpnuvan.* The scientists too, we know, are still groping for the answer! The eighth mantra of the chapter further elaborates and beautifully describes the same Supreme Power in these words:

*Sa paryagācchukramakāyamavraṇam asnāviraṁ śuddhamapāpaviddham*
*Kavirmanīṣī paribhūḥ svayambhūryāthātathyato'arthān vyadadhācchāśvatībhyaḥ samābhyaḥ*[8]

Since many words in the mantra are synthesised, these are separated and reproduced here with the respective meanings thereof, for the ease of those readers who are not well versed in Sanskrit.

*Sa* = He or That, the God. *Pari* = from or on all sides i.e., everywhere. *Agāt* = comes or goes or moves, spreads, percolates. *Śukram* = Pure, potent, or potential energy. *Akāyam* = without body or form, formless. *Avraṇam* = without hue or colour, undamaged, undecayable, stainless. *Asnāviraṁ* = without tissues or sinews, or links, or tangible connections, i.e., unbound or boundless and bondless. *Śuddham* = pure. *Apāp+vidhham* = is known as without fault or is faultless, and also that He sees or observes everyone and everything without mistake or ill-will or malice, so is just and indiscriminating. *Kavi* = seer and knower of all and everything as they are. *Manīṣī* = knows the minds, the tendencies, the traits of all and everything. *Paribhūḥ* = occurs on all sides and everywhere at all times. *Svayambhūḥ* = is by Himself, happens Himself, the Self-existent does everything Himself without any assistance. *Yāthā+tathyatah+arthān* = all creations or objects having specific uses and roles as are required in the Universe. *Vi+adadhāt* = are provided specifically i.e., makes provision for all. *Śāśvatībhyaḥ* = eternally, at all times, without break, to sustain all. *Samābhyaḥ* = for all time cycles and creations equally or, with equal hand without discrimination.

The sixteenth mantra of *Īśopaniṣad* addresses the Supreme Power as the nourisher, the illuminator, the regulator, the attractor, the gravitator and the purifier:

*Pūṣannekarṣe yama sūrya prājāpatya vyūha raśmīn samūha,*
*Tejo yatte rūpam kalyāntamam tatte paśyāmi yoasāvasau puruṣaḥ soahamasmi.*[9]

*Pūṣan* = the sustainer, the nourisher. *Ekarṣe* = the only seer, the attractor, the gravitator, the puller, the pusher, the mover. *Yama* = the regulator, the transformer. *Sūrya* = the emitter of light and energy, the solar energy, in our context the Sun. *Prājāpatya* = bestower of all creation and life and wisdom, provider or pourer of parenthood. *Vyūha* = the fort, the protection, cast wide and spread everywhere. *Raśmīn* = the rays of light, heat and energy. *Samūha* = Received in a continuous barrage or raining jointly for all and equally. *Tejo* = the light, the blaze, the heat, the shine, the resplendence, the refulgence. *Yat+te rūpam* = this beautiful face or facet of yours. *Kalyān+taṁam* = the most

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benevolent purifier and emancipator from darkness, blindness, ignorance. *Tat+te+paśyāmi* = that resplendence and benevolence of yours spread everywhere I see, observe, discern, recognise. *Yo+asā+avasau* = Who i.e., You exist and inhabit everywhere. *Puruṣaḥ* = the One that enters into, permeates everything. *So* = the same or part of the same. *Aham+asmi* = I am i.e., I too am one of the manifestations of Your Supreme Energy.

In physical terms the mantra represents a depiction of the solar system that is our immediate universe and wherein every activity is solar-energy-caused. So, once again it can be seen that the mantras speak, briefly but succinctly, of the scientific knowledge of the Vedas.

## EVIDENCE OF MONOTHEISM IN THE ṚGVEDA

Having done with the Yajurvedic references, it is time to invoke the first scripture, the Ṛgveda. The following mantra has been the top favourite of all scholars, which very explicitly states:

*Indraṁ mitraṁ varuṇam-agnim-āhuratho divyaḥ sa suparṇo garutmān,*
*Ekaṁ sad viprā bahudhā vadantyagniṁ yamaṁ mātariśvānam-āhuḥ.*[10]

*Indraṁ* = the ruler, the bestower of all wealth and enjoyment. *Mitraṁ* = friend and well wisher. *Varuṇam* = the best, the worthiest, the most desirable, worthy of being chosen, remover of doubt and ignorance. *Agnim=Agre nayati iti agni* i.e., who takes or leads forward, the elevator, the purifier, the guide, the enlightener, the imparter of knowledge, the self refulgent. *Āhuh+Athah* = is called so and so. *Sa* = He. *Suparṇo* = giver of good deeds and good fruits (results) thereof. *Garutmānaḥ* = the eldest, the heaviest, the gravitator and attractor. *Ekaṁ sad* = the one reality, that always remains the same without any change or decay, so eternal and permanent. *Viprāḥ* = the scholars, the wise, the seers, the sages. *Bahudhāḥ vadanti* = say it in many ways or call it by several names, like the *Agniṁ, Yamaṁ* = the regulator, the discipliner, the governor, the balancer, the rectifier. *Mātariśvānam* = the provider of space to live in, and air to breathe, carrier/conductor of energy i.e., energiser and sustainer of all life and substance. *Āhuḥ* = called by different names.

The crux is that the Ultimate Supreme Reality is Only One but addressed by the seers in many ways or by many names depending on the particular context, and also the faculty, the power, the functions.

Ṛgveda 6.45.16 too proclaims Him as the Only One:

*Ya eka it tamu ṣṭuhi kṛṣṭīnāṁ vicarṣaṇiḥ, patirjajñe vṛṣakratuḥ.*

*Ya eka it* = That who is the Only One. *Tam+u+ṣṭuhi* = worship only Him. *Kṛṣṭīnāṁ* = the bearer, the carrier, the mover or puller of all creations. *Patirjajñe* = the master of the whole cosmic movement and happening. *Vṛṣakratuḥ* = the pourer, the seeder, the provider of all bounties.

Exactly similar is the import of the following Ṛgveda mantra that begins with the words '*ya eka id*' i.e., He is the Only One:

*Ya eka iddhavyaścarṣaṇīnāmindraṁ taṁ gīrbhirabhyarca ābhiḥ,*
*Yaḥ patyate vṛṣabho vṛṣṇyāvāntsatyaḥ satvā purumāyaḥ sahasvān.*[11]

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*Ya eka id* = That, Who is the Only One. *Havya* = worthy of obeisance. *Charṣaṇīnām+indraṁ* = the ruler of all creations. *Taṁ+gīrbhih+abhih+archa+ābhiḥ* = praise or pray to Only That with your words and musings. *Yaḥ+pati+ate* = who is the master of all. Or *Patyate* = showers. *Vṛṣabhah+vṛṣṇyāvān* = the supreme potent impregnator, seeder, energiser and procreator *Satvā+purumāyaḥ+sahasvān* = the eternal omnipotent energy permeating, inhabiting, bearing and surviving all.

Ṛgveda cautions against and prohibits one from thinking of anyone else except Him, in the following words:

*Mā cidanyad vi śaṁsata sakhāyo ma riṣaṇyata,*
*Indramit stotā vṛṣaṇaṁ sacā sute muhurukthā ca śaṁsata.*[12]

Do not think of anyone, do not praise and associate with anyone else except Him, as He is the Supreme Ruler, Who bestows bliss. He is worthy of praise or pray, come together and revere Him again and again.

Another mantra calls Him as the Creator of the universe, the Just One with no discrimination.

*Viśvakarmā vimanā ādvihāyā dhātā vidhātā paramota saṁdṛk,*
*Teṣāmiṣṭāni samiṣā madanti yatrā saptarṣīn para ekamāhuḥ.*[13]

*Viśvakarmā* = the creator of the universe. *Vimanā ād vihāyā* = like the sky provides space for accommodation for all type of existence, thought and liking. *Dhātā parama* = the ultimate bearer. *Uta saṁ+dṛk* = and sees, treats all equally. *Teṣām+iṣṭāni sam+iṣa madanti* = It is from Him that all get their desired objects of consumption and enjoyment. *Yatrā saptarṣīn pare ekamāhuḥ* = He, who is beyond the grip of the seven senses or the seers – the rishis, is the Only One.

Another mantra reinforces the above as:

*Yo naḥ pitā janitā yo vidhātā dhāmāni veda bhuvanāni viśvā,*
*Yo devānāṁ nāmadhā eka eva taṁ saṁpraśnaṁ bhuvanā yantyanyā.*[14]

*Yo* = Who is. *Naḥ* = our. *Pitā janitā* = father and mother, so bears and nurses us. *Yo vidhātā dhāmāni* = Who also creates and bears all abodes and entities with their specific traits and details. *Veda bhuvanāni viśvā* = knows all abodes, entities and forms of the universe. *Yo devānāṁ nāmdhā* = Who assigns the identities and roles to all energy forms and holds and bears them. *Eka eva* = Is the Only One. *Taṁ+saṁ+praśnaṁ+bhuvanāh+yanti+anyāh* = all others without exception are equally dependent on Him and move and sustain because of Him and seek Him.

Another mantra describes the release and spread of energy from the nucleus of that One Supreme Power:

*Tamidgarbhaṁ prathamaṁ dadhra āpo yatra devāḥ samagacchanta viśve,*
*Ajasya nābhāvadhyekamarpitaṁ yasmin viśvāni bhuvanāni tasthuḥ.*[15]

*Tam+id+garbhaṁ prathamaṁ* = From His womb first of all. *Dadhra āpo* = emanates or goes forth the active energy. *Yatra devāḥ* = from where all forms of energy. *Samagachhnta viśve* = go, proceed in all directions and to all places. *Ajasya nābhāu* = From the navel, the nucleus of that Unborn, Who exists already and always. *Adhy+ekam+arpitaṁ* = is sent forth, given by that One to others. *Yasmin viśvāni bhuvanāni tasthuḥ* = from whereon it gets vested in everything and assumes all abodes and forms or entities.

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Quite a similar expression is found in the Ṛk 10.121.1.

*Hiraṇyagarbhaḥ samavartatāgre bhūtasya jātaḥ patireka āsīt,*
*Sa dādhāra pṛthivīṁ dyāmutemāṁ kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema.*

The bright (golden) seed of that energy is always present in the store or womb of that Supreme Lord to procreate or produce all entities or objects. He is the creator, the bearer of all light, energy, space and earth-like celestial bodies. Let us pray and dedicate ourselves to that owner for all the bounties and participate in the cosmic movement by doing our bit with the help of the energy and matter provided by Him.

The next Ṛcā further elaborates and adds:

*Ya ātmadā baladā yasya viśva upāsate praśiṣaṁ yasya devāḥ,*
*Yasya cāyāmṛtaṁ yasya mṛtyuḥ kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema.*[16]

He, who gives us the spiritual knowledge and life (*ātmadā*), and also the energy and empowerment (*baladā*), whose praise is sung by the whole world (*yasya viśva upāsate*), on whom depend all energy forms (*praśiṣaṁ yasya devāḥ*), whose protective cover sustains and secures us or keeps us alive, and who bestows us emancipation (*yasyah+cāyā+amṛtaṁ*), whose disobedience is the cause of pains like death etc. (*yasya mṛtyuḥ*), let us pray to him always for all the boons that He gives (*kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema*).

The third mantra of the same sūkta – 10.121 states the same fact as:

*Yaḥ prāṇato nimiṣato mahitvaika idrājā jagato babhuva,*
*Ya īṣe asya dvipadaścatuspadaḥ kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema.*

He, who imparts life or energy every moment with His powers, that Only One is the ruler of all happenings in the universe and the creation. He is the Lord of all these bipods and quad-pods, therefore the Only One worthy of being submitted to.

In an almost similar vein, speak the 7th, 8th and 10th mantras of that sūkta – 10.121.

*Āpo ha yadbṛhatīrviśvamāyan garbhaṁ dadhānā janayantīragnim,*
*Tato devānāṁ samavartatāsurekaḥ kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema.*

It is because of His ordaining that all the activity in this vast expanse – the universe – happens. He issues forth the bright spark and generates the fire, the heat, the intellect, the will and knowledge from His womb. From that then proceed all other forms that have already been existing in Him, the Only One, whom let us pray to. Agni here is both the first and foremost element – the prime energy as well as intellect, will and knowledge.

*Yaścidāpo mahinā paryapaśyad dakṣaṁ dadhānā janayantīryajñam,*
*Yo deveṣvadhi deva eka āsītkasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema.*

*Yaś+cid+āpo+mahinā* = He, who conceives and wills all activity with His power, the might. *Pari+apaśyad* = foresees everything everywhere. *Dakṣaṁ dadhānā* = imparts the skills/abilities. *Janayantīh+yajñam* = causes, generates, bears all productive and transformative work – the cosmic happenings. (Note: *Yajña* in Vedic parlance means all that and much more.) *Yo deveṣu+adhi+deva* = He, who is supreme power, the energy and provider and superior most of all other energies and forces. Therefore, let us dedicate everything to Him only.

*Prajāpate na tvadetānyanyo viśvā jātāni pari tā babhūva,*

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*Yat kāmāste juhumastanno astu vayaṁ syāma patayo rayīṇām.*

*Prajā+pate* = Ruler, creator, owner of. *Na+tvad+etāna+anya* = None else than You. *Viśvā jātāni* = all creation issues out of you. *Paritā+babhūva* = spread to all sides, in all directions. *Yat+kāmāh+te* = whatever is desired of you. *Astu+vayaṁ+syāma+patayo+ rayīṇām* = that is provided by you and we prosper. Another interpretation is that you have given us all empowerment and we beget what we think of and act about.

Having been impressed by this sūkta, as interpreted by Swami Dayanand Saraswati in his *Ṛgvedādibhāsyabhūmikā*, Max Müller acknowledges in '*A History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature*' as follows: "I add only one more hymn (Rig. 10.121) in which the idea of one God is expressed with such power and decision that it will make us hesitate before we deny to the Aryans an instinctive Monotheism."[17]

## CONFIRMATION BY THE ATHARVAVEDA & THE SĀMAVEDA

A very interesting mantra that occurs in the Ṛgveda (10.81.3), but repeated verbatim in the Yajurveda (17.19), and Atharvaveda (13.2.26), reads as:

*Viśvataścakṣuruta viśvatomukho viśvatobāhuruta viśvataspāt,*
*Saṁ bāhubhyāṁ dhamati saṁ patatrairdyāvābhūmī janayan deva ekaḥ.*

*Viśvatah+chakṣuh+uta* = He oversees all and enables all to see, He is oriented towards all, *Viśvato+mukho* = is the face, the mouth, the voice of all, so enables all to communicate and consume for survival, *Viśvatah+bāhuh+Utah* = bears all or keeps everyone afloat, empowers all. *Saṁ+bāhubhyāṁ+dhamati* = He moves all with his powers, *Saṁ+patatrai+ dyāvā+bhūmi* = and creates everything including the celestial bodies and systems like the earth, the space or the sky and the light etc., with his three fold energy like the atoms. So, is the only provider, the creator.

Atharvaveda offers another confirmation:

*Divyo gandharvo bhuvanasya yaspatireka eva namasyo vikṣvīdyaḥ,*
*Taṁ tvā yaumi brahmaṇā divya deva namaste astu divi te sadhastham.*[18]

He, who is the lord and bearer of luminous abodes like the earth and the sun, is the Only One worthy of bowing before and worthy of praise by all (*vikṣv+īdya*). O resplendent lord, I wish to connect to You with my thought and bow before You, the luminous in Your own right, or by Yourself wherever You are, or You enlighten everything or place.

Here is a group of six Atharvaveda mantras (13.4.16–21) which caution against misconstruing or misunderstanding the various appellations of the One Supreme Power, the God, as being many Gods. The mantras are:

*Na dvitīyo na tṛtīyaścaturtho nāpyucyate.*
*Na pañcamo na ṣaṣṭhaḥ saptamo nāpyucyate.*
*Nāṣṭamo na navamo daśamo nāpyucyate.*
*Sa sarvasmai vi paśyati yacca prāṇati yacca na.*
*Tamidaṁ nigataṁ sahaḥ sa eṣa eka ekavṛdeka eva.*

There is no second, no third, no fourth, no fifth, no sixth, no seventh, no eighth, no ninth, no tenth. He is the Only One thoroughly seeing all or to be seen in all, He, who

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energises or enlivens us all. *Tam+idaṁ nigataṁ sahaḥ* = all ensue out of Him because of his benevolence. *Sa eṣa eka* = He is the Only One. *Eka vṛd eka eva* = The Only One, the Unique in the cosmic cycle, i.e., all emanate from Him, all stay or exist in Him and all go back to Him in repetitive cycles, whose efficient cause is He alone.

The above mantras embody an emphatic, repetitive and explicit denial of any possibility of the existence of more than one God.

Ṛgveda 10.114.5 reasserts, the by now proverbial statement of '*Bahudhā vadānti*' fame that has been already quoted above in slightly different words, as:

*Suparṇaṁ viprāḥ kavayo vacobhirekaṁ santaṁ bahudhā kalpayanti.*

In this Ṛcā the usage '*bahudhā vadānti*' is found replaced by '*bahudhā kalpayanti*', i.e., in place of "say variously or diversely", here it says that the do-gooders, the virtuous (*suparṇaṁ*), the scholars (*viprāḥ*), the seers (*kavayoh*), say that He is One (*vacobhih ekaṁ*), the sages (*santaṁ*) think or discern or perceive Him in many a way or form (*bahudhā kalpayanti*) - the import being that whatever form the existence assumes is vested with the same Supreme Energy, suggesting that we see God's energy manifesting in various forms. This is akin to the spirit of the Yajurveda Mantra already quoted: "*Īśā vāsyamidaṁ sarvaṁ yatkiṁ ca jagatyāṁ jagat.*" So, the intention of the Rishi is to make us understand that everything is created by and belongs to the Supreme Consciousness, the God, who is the Only One.

Ṛgveda 8.25.16 offers another testimony supporting the above:

*Ayameka itthā purūru casṭe vi viśpatiḥ, Tasya vratānyanu vaścarāmasi.*

*Ayam eka ithhā* = He is certainly the Only One. *Purūru vicasṭe* = oversees and sits within or foresees everything specifically. *Viśpatiḥ* = Lord or master of all. *Tasya vratāni+anu vah+carāmi* = We i.e., everything and everyone, follow the rules, mandates or functions created and assigned by Him.

Ṛk 8.1.27 describes Him as the Only One (*Ya eko asti*), the Supreme Judge, the great adjudicator (*daṁsanā mahāñ*), sensitive to and strict in ensuring compliance of the rules (*ugro abhivrataih*). The text is:

*Ya eko asti daṁsanā mahāñ ugro abhi vṛtaiḥ.*

Ṛk 1.100.7 states that He is the Only One benevolent Lord of all. (*Sa viśvasya karuṇasyeśa eko*).

Sāmaveda mantra no. 372, repeated in Atharvaveda at 7.2.1 describes Him as having all the energy, owner of light and enlightenment, who alone is worth invoking and propitiating by the humans. He is the energiser, the creator of all the old or the earlier ones and the newer or the latter ones, i.e., He is the renewer, the repeater and the enactor of the cycles of creation(s) in eternity. The text is:

*Sameta viśvā ojasā patiṁ divo ya eka id bhūratithir janānām,*
*Sa pūrvyo nūtanamājigīṣaṁ taṁ varttanīranu vāvṛta eka it.*

Ṛgveda 1.7.9 declares Him as the only bearer, the creator of all forms and bounties, animate or inanimate (*carṣaṇīnāṁ vasūnāmirajyati*), and also the ruler (*Indraḥ*), the arbitrator or adjudicator (*Pañca*) of all creation. It reads:

*Ya ekaścarṣaṇīnāṁ vasūnāmirajyati. Indraḥ pañca kṣitīnāṁ.*

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Ṛgveda 1.52.14 describes Him as unlimited, boundless, endless, infinite etc., in these words:

*Na yasya dyāvāpṛthivī anu vyaco na sindhavo rajaso antamānaśuḥ,*
*Nota svavṛṣṭiṁ made asya yudhyata eko anyaccakṛṣe viśvamānuśak.*

He, who cannot be defined or described or delimited by the skies or the earth i.e., their limits, nor can the seas or all waters including water bodies and clouds and luminous celestial bodies delineate or delimit Him or find His end, the boundaries, the expanse. Neither can He be identified, gripped, or described by anyone, He is the Only One who all are yoked to, i.e., everything is pulled, pushed or propelled and impelled by Him alone.

Before the discussion is wrapped up, it seems essential to deal with a common source of confusion, which happen to be the words '*Deva*' and '*Devatā*', and various names thereof, as are quite often used in the Vedic mantras. These have led many scholars, particularly the foreigners, to believe that these all are independent gods, and as such their being worshipped individually by the Indian Brahmans has lent credence to the conception of polytheism. The fact, as has been stated earlier, however, is that the various names of the God denote only the various qualities, faculties and attributes of the One Supreme Power.

For settling the controversy, it would be advisable and appropriate to find out the actual generic, or to use the Vedic parlance, the Sanskrit root-based i.e., '*dhātu parak*' or '*dhātu ādhāriṭ*' '*yaugic*' '*artha*' – meaning of the words – '*deva*' and '*devatā*. In this pursuit, the most authoritative and authentic guide that has been used by several scholars including Swami Dayanand Saraswati again happens to be the Nirukta of Acharya Yāska. According to him these words emanate from the roots – '*dā*', '*dyut*', '*dīp*', and '*dyu*' etc. His original '*sutra*' detailing these reads as: *Devo dānādvā, dīpanādvā, dyotanādvā, dyusthāno bhavatīti vā.*[19] Simply put, he says "*Yo devaḥ sā devatā*" i.e., who gives, imparts, denotes, implies, signifies whatever (including a sense) is the '*devatā*' thereof. By this simple definition, even the theme, the sense or the subject matter of a mantra is the '*devatā*' of that particular mantra, which is confirmed by Nirukta as: *Yatkāma riṣiryasyāṁ devatāyāmārthapatyamicchan stutiṁ prayunkte taddaivataḥ sa mantro bhavati.*[20] The meaning is that whatever the Rishi desires or intends to describe, explain or elaborate, he chooses that theme or phenomenon and that becomes the *devatā* of that mantra. To substantiate this, a few Vedic Ṛcās are warranted to be cited. The following Ṛgveda mantras address the Supreme Power as being *Agni, Indro, Vṛṣabhaḥ* and so on:

*Tvamagna indro vṛṣabhaḥ satāmasi tvaṁ viṣṇururugāyo namasyaḥ*
*Tvaṁ brahmā rayivid brahmaṇaspate tvaṁ vidhartaḥ sacase purandhyā.*
*Tvamagne rājā varuṇo dhṛtavratastvaṁ mitro bhavasi dasma īḍyaḥ,*
*Tvamaryamā satpatiryasya saṁbhujaṁ tvamaṁśo vidathe deva bhājayuḥ.*
*Tvamagne rudro asuro maho divastvaṁ śardho mārutaṁ pṛkṣa īśiṣe,*
*Tvaṁ vātairaruṇairyāsi śaṅgayastavaṁ pūṣā vidhataḥ pāsi nu tmanā.*
*Tvamagne draviṇodā araṁkṛte tvaṁ devaḥ savitā ratnadhā asi,*
*Tvaṁ bhago nṛpate vasva īśiṣe tvaṁ pāyurdame yaste'vidhat.*[21]

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It is obvious from the above that the Rishi of this mantra addresses the Supreme Power in second person by various names given to each force of nature according to the form or the function that that assumes in the universe. The Rishi says, "You are '*agni*', '*indrah*', '*vrṣabhaḥ*', '*viṣṇu*', '*savitā*', etc. The words like '*bhavasi*', '*yāsi*', '*draviṇodā*', '*ratnadhā*' '*vasva*', and '*avidhat*' mean, "You become, go from this to that, give all wealth, adorn all valuables, reside in, and make all the arrangements" as needed to run the cosmic activity. The mantra thus clearly indicates that it is the Supreme Energy of the God that assumes all these forms, performs all these functions, converts one form to another, produces all matter, wealth and enjoyments and ordains all these to happen – '*avidhat*'. It is to be noted that '*Agni*' being the prime and most pervasive and versatile of all energy-forms is invoked repeatedly. This too coincides with the understanding of modern science. The same is restated in the following words:

*Tvamimā'oṣadhīḥ soma viśvāstvamapo'ajanayastvaṁ gāḥ,*
*Tvamā tatanthorvantarikṣaṁ tvaṁ jyotiṣā vi tamo vavartha.*[22]

You are all these vegetation (*oṣadhīḥ*) – edible as well as medicinal, the energiser or replete with energy and nutrition (*sa+uma*=soma) for all, producer of all kinetic energy and activity and inter-communication (*viśvāstvamapo ajanayastvaṁ gāḥ*); creator of space or sky, the horizon and firmament (*tvamātanthoh+ antarikṣaṁ*), creator and source of light and the dark cover i.e., day and night (*tvaṁ jyotiṣā vi tamo vavartha*).

Yajurveda 32.1 offers the same vein, but in third person:

*Tadevāgnistadādityastadvāyustadū candramāḥ,*
*Tadeva śukraṁ tadbrahma tā'āpaḥ sa prajāpatiḥ.*

That is *agni* – the source of heat, intellect and enlightenment; that, *āditya* – the source of light and energy (Sun), that is *vāyu* – omnipotent, all-sustaining air, *prāṇa*, and that is *candramāḥ* – the source of cool pleasant reflected light, that also is *śukraṁ* – the subtle pure potent seed energy, that is *brahma* – the spread out energy, that is *āpaḥ* – the active and activating energy, that is *prajāpatiḥ* – the father and owner of all creation.

Atharvaveda mantras 13.4.4 and 5 make a strikingly similar statement:

*So'ryamā sa varuṇaḥ sa rudraḥ sa mahādevaḥ,*
*So agniḥ sa u sūryaḥ sa u mahāyamaḥ.*

He is *aryamā, varuṇaḥ, rudraḥ, mahādevaḥ, agniḥ, sūryaḥ* and *mahāyamaḥ* i.e., He is all these, implying that these are His various names according to the manifestations and functions.

## CORROBORATION BY MODERN SCHOLARS

The evidence cited above, picked up directly from the Vedas, should be sufficient, though not yet exhaustive, as there are numerous other, rather perhaps all the Vedic mantras that can be invoked, to prove beyond doubt that monotheism is an endemic, original, innate, instinctive and integral theme of the Vedas. It must also be amply clear by now that there is hardly any need for an outside certification or support in this regard. Yet, it may be of interest to know that a number of eminent scholars of other religions have made some very honest and earnest effort to correctly understand and appreciate the Vedic monotheism.

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Charles Coleman in his book 'The Mythology of the Hindus' says: "The Almighty, infinite, eternal, incomprehensible, self-existent being; He who sees everything, though never seen;... is BRAHM! the one unknown, true being, the creator, the preserver and destroyer of the universe. Under such, and innumerable other definitions, is the Deity acknowledged in the Veda."[23]

The author of the 'The Theogony of the Hindoos' Count M. Bjornstjerna records: "These truly sublime ideas cannot fail to convince us, that the Vedas recognise *one only God*, who is Almighty, Infinite, Eternal, Self-existent, the light and the Lord of the universe."[24]

The German scholar Frederick Schlegal in his famous book 'Wisdom of the Ancient Indians' acknowledges: "It cannot be denied that the early Indians possessed a knowledge of the true God; all their writings are replete with sentiments and expressions noble, clear, and severely grand, as deeply conceived and reverently expressed as in any human language in which men have spoken of their God."[25]

True to the title of his book 'Superiority of the Vedic Religion', W.D. Brown in very few words yet so overtly opines: "It (Vedic Religion) recognises but One God."

The famous Parsi scholar, Furdun Dadachanji writes,

> The Vedas teach nothing but *Monotheism* of the purest kind, the belief that this universe manifests the love, might, wisdom and glory of God, who eternally evolves and dissolves alternately innumerable systems of world, for the benefit, discipline and well-being of jīvātmās, according to the eternal laws of nature (called Rita in the Vedas) and also according to the Law of Karma (as implied in it).[26]

An eminent scholar of Islam, Sir Mohd. Yamin Khan Kt. C.I.E. traces the course deviation caused by the Indian Brahmans, and the correction thereof carried out by Swami Dayanand in the following words:

> Originally the conception of God among the Hindus was right, when they believed Him to be Unit and Omnipresent, but when they started dividing Him into different shapes according to different functions which they considered He performed, they strayed far from their original conception. The result was that many, who were heroes in their life time, were gradually turned into incarnations of God and idolatry increased.

He further adds,

> Many Hindus believe that all their sins are washed away by having a dip in the Ganges. Thus it is seen that the great philosophical religion which conceived Unity of God in the beginning, brought up corruption and degradation of high ideas, when His attributes as the Creator, the Preserver and Destroyer were divided and allotted to different deities possessing separate entities in different forms.

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Commending Swami Dayanand, Sir Yamin says: "Swami Dayanand Saraswati a man of great learning started preaching the old religion of the Vedas which conceived Unity of God."[27]

Sri Aurobindo thrashes the whole matter thread bare and concludes the debate. He asks:

> What is the main positive issue in this matter? An interpretation of Veda must stand or fall by its central conception of the Vedic religion and the amount of support given to it by the intrinsic evidence of the Veda itself. Here Dayananda's view is quite clear, its foundation inexpugnable. The Vedic hymns are chanted to the One Deity under many names, names which are used and even designed to express His qualities and powers. Was this conception of Dayananda's arbitrary conceit fetched out of his own too ingenious imagination?

He emphatically replies himself, "Not at all; it is the explicit statement of the Veda itself."

Aurobindo authoritatively exclaims, "One existent, sages" – not the ignorant, mind you, but the seers, the men of knowledge, – "speak of in many ways, as Indra, as Yama, as Matarishwan, as Agni." "The Vedic Rishis ought surely to have known something about their own religion, more, let us hope, than Roth or Max Müller, and this is what they knew." Chiding the modern scholars he remarks,

> We are aware how modern scholars twist away from the evidence. This hymn, they say, was a late production, this loftier idea which it expresses with so clear a force rose up somehow in the later Aryan mind or was borrowed by those ignorant fire-worshippers, sun-worshippers, sky-worshippers from their cultured and philosophic Dravidian enemies. But throughout the Veda we have confirmatory hymns and expressions: Agni or Indra or another is expressly hymned as one with all the other gods. Agni contains all other divine powers within himself, the Maruts are described as all the gods, one deity is addressed by the names of others as well as his own, or, most commonly, he is given as Lord and King of the universe attributes only appropriate to the Supreme Deity. Ah, but that cannot mean, ought not to mean, must not mean, the worship of One; let us invent a new word, call it henotheism and suppose that the Rishis did not really believe Indra or Agni to be the Supreme Deity but treated any god or every god as such for the nonce, perhaps he might feel the more flattered and lend a more gracious ear for so hyperbolic a compliment! But why should not the foundation of Vedic thought be natural monotheism rather than this new-fangled monstrosity of henotheism? Well, because primitive barbarians could not possibly have risen to such high conceptions and, if you allow them to have so risen, you imperil our theory of evolutionary stages of the human development and you destroy our whole idea about the sense of Vedic hymns and their place in the history of mankind. Truth must hide herself, common sense disappear from the field so that a theory may flourish! I ask, on this point,

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and it is the fundamental point, who deals most straightforwardly with the text, Dayananda or the Western scholars?[28]

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# CHAPTER 38

# Idol Worship: A Non-Vedic Tradition

*Dharmavir*

For centuries, idol worship has been synonymous with the *Hindu pūjā-paddhati* (form of worship). Innumerable temples, big and small, can be found in every nook and corner of India. The value of the offerings made by the devotees at some of the major temples exceeds even the annual budget of certain small countries. Under the influence of Purāṇas, a perception persists that the Hindus worship 33 crore gods and goddesses. It is beyond the imagination of an ordinary Hindu that idolatry is a violation of the very Vedic dharma which he holds in high esteem. He or she worships idols with piety, but for the 'beneficiaries', it is a system that works by hiding the real religion from the devotees. Innumerable gods and goddesses, millions of temples and billions in money! It is certainly not the sublime concept of 'seeing god even in stone.'

In this scenario, when a *Sannyāsī* questioned idol worship in the 19th century, it was an extraordinary event; an open challenge to the centuries old and well-established system. The *Sannyāsī* not only refuted idol worship, but did so in a manner quite revolutionary, on the very basis of the Vedas, the oldest scripture of the Hindus. No one, in the history of India, had ever dared to challenge the religious establishment in such a manner. It amounted to almost uprooting the so-called religion and breaking the hegemony of pandits, *bābās* and *maṭhādhīshas*. It was a challenge that required the greatest possible courage, self-confidence and erudition.

## THE RISE OF IDOLATRY

### *The Vedic Meaning of Mūrti and Related Terms*

The word *mūrti* stands for idol or any concrete form. In Sanskrit, *mūrt* is used for *vyakt* (appearance). Another meaning is to come into *ākāra* (form) from *nirākāra* (formless).

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All existence in the universe is of two types – inert (*achetan*) and animated (*chetan*). According to Maharshi Dayanand, the two animated entities, soul and God, are distinct and inherently beginningless. *Prakṛti* (primordial matter) is an inert and beginningless entity, which in succession, is sometimes *vyakta* (appearing in form of creation) and sometimes *avyakta* (dissolved), just as night follows day and vice-versa.[1] In other words, when the universe is created it is *vyakt* and when dissolved (*pralayāvasthā*) it is *avyakta.*[2] The Aupaniṣadic words '*mūrtam cha amūrtam cha*' are synonymous with *vyaktam* and *avyaktam.*[3]

In Sanskrit literature, *mūrti* denotes various things. Amarkosha explains *mūrti* as *Mūrtiḥ kāṭhinyakāyayoḥ* (मूर्तिः काठिन्यकाययोः)[4] i.e., the word *mūrti* is used for hardness and body. *Mūrti* means anything having a form. In this way anything made of gold, silver, brass, iron, clay, etc., is called *mūrti.*

When a 'thing with a form' (*sākāra vastu*) is compared with another 'thing with a form' (*sākāra vastu*), it is called *pratimā.* In Sanskrit, the original meaning of *pratimā* is a weight-measure (*bāt*). Anything used for weighing is called *pratimā.* A thing may be compared with other things in many ways, such as shape, weight and ability. A similarity on any ground can only exist between two 'things with form' (*sākāra vastu*). A 'thing with a form' (*sākāra vastu*) cannot be compared with a formless thing (*nirākāra*). Therefore, an idol can only be made of a person or a thing, having a form. The sight of a form reminds one of a similar form, as a picture reminds one of a person and vice versa. Because of similarity, the word *pratimā* came to be used for *mūrti*, and has now, become synonymous with it. The creation (*sansāra*) is concrete (*mūrt*), therefore, there is no dearth of idols (*mūrties*) in it. However, as the Yajurveda declares, there is no one like God and hence, there is no idol of His.[5]

***The Rise of Idolatry***

As established above, the word *mūrti* itself is not the subject of dispute or discussion, but confusion arises when the word *pūjā* is used with it. *Pūjā* denotes hospitality, service, respect, obedience, defence etc.

The word *Yajñā* is used for *agnihotra* which means *deva pūjā* also.[6] In the Vedas, even inert objects (*jada padārtha*) are called *devtā,*[7] while *chetan* (animated) entities are also called *deva,* and the God is called *Mahādeva.* In this way, *sākāra* and *nirākāra* (things with and without form), *jaḍa* and *chetan* (inert and animated) all came to be called *deva.* These include - inert objects like fire, air, water, etc., and animate beings like father, mother, teacher, guest, etc.[8]

As *deva* came to mean *jaḍa* as well as *chetan,* both, over time, began being worshipped. As one prays to *chetan* because of ability and utility, so one began to pray to *achetan* entities like fire, air and water. *Chetan* is pleased by food, seat, service and respect etc., so began the tradition of trying to similarly please the *jaḍa devatās* also.

*Jaḍa* or *chetan, sākāra* or *nirākāra* – all types of *devas* were personified. People made idols of all these *devas,* marked with particular properties of the things they represent. In this process even God was personified. As there can be no personification without form and name (*nāma rūpa*), so the form and names of great men entered the

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category of God. Initially, the forms of Śiva, Viṣṇu, Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, etc., seem to find a place in this category. Later, people began worshipping their favourite persons (*iṣṭa*) also. In the process, the founders of different cults, *mahants,* gurus etc., were turned into gods with their own temples. Over time, even the hypocritical *bābās* started getting themselves worshipped. As a terrible consequence of idolatry, the formless, omnipresent, *chetan* God changed into *jaḍa.* Thus, the concept of converting the formless God into *sākāra* became the basis of idolatry.

***The Impact of Idolatry***

Idolatry affected the society in two ways. Firstly, the practice of idolatry promoted a psyche of fear and cowardice. By creating deep apprehensions of the displeasure of the gods, the priests entrapped the kings as well as the commoners in a web of fear. This trickery continues even today. Secondly, idolatry encouraged laziness in the society. A conviction gained ground that one could get one's desired goals without any making any meaningful efforts, by simply worshipping and pleasing the gods. Pandit Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya elaborates,

> He (idolator) is in the dark and wishes to remain in the dark. He does not seek light. If you throw a beam of light upon him by interrogation, he resents it and shudders at it. He feels that mental analysis might make him a renegade and therefore he avoids it. Not that he cannot reason. Among idolaters you will find the best lawyers whose legal acumen is awe-inspiring; professors of logic whose fallacy-detecting capacity is unquestionable; shrewd politicians who clearly see the invisible forces working in the domain of world politics; traders from whose keen eye, no corner of the world market is hidden; financiers who can successfully combat the dodges of exploiters; astronomers whose knowledge of the heavenly bodies is much clearer than that of their own house; and mathematicians well versed in the intricacies of mathematical calculations. They are all intellectuals and you will find them worshipping in temples as devoutly as their uneducated brothers and sisters, – side by side with them, and as vaguely too. Intellect they have, and highly developed too. But its use is confined to mundane affairs only. They believe that devotion and reasoning can never go together, and it is sheer blasphemy to try to bring them together.[9]

## DAYANAND'S CHALLENGE TO IDOLATRY

***A Turning Point in Dayanand's Childhood***

The disbelief in idolatry took roots in Maharshi Dayanand's mind, quite early in his life. At the tender age of thirteen, the child Mool Shankar, along with his devout father, was observing a night vigil in a Shiva temple, when a seemingly minor event, raised a major storm in his life. Maharshi Dayanand describes the event in his autobiography, as follows:

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> He (my father) fell asleep, leaving me to watch alone a miracle which happened just then: a mouse came out of its hide-out and began to wander around the idol of Shiva. Not only that, it even climbed on the idol and ate the *akshata* (offerings) too.
>
> Now thought upon thought and question upon question disturbed my mind. Is it possible, I asked myself, that he was the same Mahādeva, the semblance of man, the idol of a personal god that I see bestriding his bull before me, and who, according to religious accounts, walks about, eats, sleeps, and drinks, and who holds a trident in his hand, beats his *dumroo* (drum) and pronounces curses upon men? Is he the one who is invoked as the Lord of Kailash, the Supreme Being and the divine hero of all the stories we read of him in the Purāṇas?[10]

Mool Shankar woke up his father and sought to clarify his doubts, but on not finding a satisfactory answer, he returned home, broke his fast and went off to sleep. This child was to go on to refute idolatry all his life.

***The Futility of Idolatry***

Maharshi Dayanand's denouncement of idolatry is based on scholarly and serious thought that covers many areas such as philosophical, economic and social. He calls idolatry a sin and also holds it to be a cause of economic loss, and an enhancer of social corruption.[11]

Referring to the people who regard idolatry as '*sthūl lakshya*' and a staircase to God, he says idolatry is not a staircase, but a ditch. It is like a game of dolls. He holds them ignorant who think idolatry is instrumental in reaching *Brahma*. One can achieve *Brahma* by the study of scriptures, the service and company of scholars and speaking the truth, etc. Regarding those who say that God is to be worshipped through idolatry as He is present in the idol, Maharshi Dayanand argues that when God is omnipresent then seeing Him in a certain object and not seeing Him elsewhere is like believing that the sovereign Lord of the earth rules over a small cottage to the exclusion of his whole empire.[12] He presents sound pleas against idolatry being helpful in *Īśvara-upāsnā* (god worship):

> Q.- Mind can be concentrated on a material object, but it is difficult to rivet it on an immaterial one, hence the worship of idols is justifiable.
>
> A.- No, the concentration of mind on a material object is impossible, for it can grasp it at once and after mastering all the details, wanders over fresh objects. On the other hand, in the case of Immaterial, Infinite God, do what it will, the mind will never be able to comprehend Him. God being Indivisible the mind cannot wander. It contemplates His nature, attributes, characteristics and being beatified is perfectly focused. Had it been possible to concentrate the mind on a material object, all the people of the world would have been able to concentrate their minds, because it remains engrossed in worldly objects such as one's wife,

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children and friends and wealth, but no one can concentrate his mind except on an abstract Being because He is Indivisible.[13]

To those, who say that attainment of God is possible through faith in any object which one may choose to pin one's faith to, he replies –

> Now tell us, whether your faith is always right or not? If it be so, you will have to believe that God is subject to the power of your faith. Why don't you then convert clay into gold and silver, pebbles into diamonds and emeralds, etc., the sea-foam into pearls, water into clarified butter, milk and curd, etc., and dust into fine flour by the power of your faith?[14]

On invoking and making God leave by the means of *mantras,* he says:

> If, as you say, that God comes into the image when invoked, why does not the idol show signs of consciousness and why does not the image also leave when God is asked to depart? Whence does it come and where does it go? The fact of the matter is that the All-pervading Spirit can neither come into an idol, nor leave it. If your *mantras* are so efficacious that you can summon God, why can you not infuse life into your dead son by the force of the very same *mantras?* Again why can you not bid the soul to depart the body of your enemy?
>
> The truth is that the Popes trade upon the credulity of unsophisticated people like you. There is not a single word in the *Veda* to support idol worship and the belief that God can be summoned and bidden to depart (at the will of the devotee).[15]

***Vedic Evidence against Idolatry***

Maharshi Dayanand not only refuted idol worship logically, he also quoted evidence from the Vedas and Shāstras to prove *mūrti-pūjā* anti-Veda.

Explaining the Veda-mantras in the chapters on *Stuti Prārthanā Upāsanā, Brahma-vidyā,* etc., he proves the futility of idol worship –

> They are enveloped in darkness, in other words, are steeped in ignorance and sunk in the greatest depths of misery who worship the uncreated, eternal *prakṛti* - - the material cause of the world – in place of the All-pervading God, but those who worship visible things born of the *prakṛti,* such as the earth, trees, bodies (human and the like) in place of God are enveloped in still greater darkness, in other words, they are extremely foolish, fall into an awful hell of pain and sorrow, and suffer terribly for a long time.[16]
>
> The Formless Supreme Spirit that pervades the universe can have no material representation, likeness or image.[17]

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> He who is not the object of the comprehension of the tongue, (that is who cannot be described like other things. We say, for instance, 'Here is water, take it.' But we cannot, in the same way, say, 'Here is God, grasp Him'). But with whose support and influence the tongue does its work - him thou know thy God, and worship. Whatever is other than God is not worthy of worship.[18]

In his *Vedabhashya* and other books, Dayanand profusely quotes mantras depicting nature of formless and all-pervading Brahma – *Sa paryagācchukramakāyamavraṇam...*,[19] *Sahasraśīrṣā puruṣaḥ....*[20] *Viśvataścakṣurta...*[21]

***The Proper Method of Prayer***

Maharshi Dayanand not only refuted idol worship but also filled the void resulting from the lack of it. In Pañcamahāyajñāvidhi, Sanskarvidhi, Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, he details the proper method of worshipping the formless *Brahma.* Moreover, clarifying the Vedic concept of 'worshipping the five gods' or real *devas,* he provides a meaningful, compassionate and respectful approach towards others that can promote peace, harmony and well-being in one's family and society -

> Q.- Is no form of idol worship permissible? What is then meant by the expression *worship of the five gods* which has been in common use since time immemorial? Does it not imply the worship of *the* gods called *Śiva, Viṣṇu, Ambika, Ganeśa* and *Sūryas*?
>
> A.- No form of idol worship is permissible, but the worship of the five living gods is our duty. This expression *Pañca Yajñā* or *the worship of the five gods* – has a very good meaning, but ignorant fools have degraded it and construed it to mean something altogether different from what was originally intended. The worship of *Śiva* and such-like gods has already been condemned. We shall now explain what is meant by *the worship of the five gods* which is sanctioned by the *Vedas.* This may be termed worship of gods that are truly worthy of reverence. "The *first* object of worship is the mother. It is the duty of her sons and daughters to serve this goddess with all their heart and all their soul, and keep her happy. Let her never be treated harshly." "The *second* object of worship is father. This god should also be served like the mother." The *third* object of worship is the teacher who bestows knowledge (upon his pupils). This god should also be served with utmost devotion." "The *fourth* object of worship is the altruistic teacher of humanity who is learned, deeply preaching the truth and thereby making the people happy." "The *fifth* object of worship is the husband for the wife and the wife for the husband." These are the five living gods who bring a man into being and bring him up, and it is through them that he gains true knowledge, sound culture and is instructed into the righteous principles of conduct. It is the worship of these that leads one to God. Whoever does not worship them and worships idols instead, is a transgressor of the *Vedic* principles.[22]

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Dayanand's revolt against idol worship that had begun in his childhood persisted all his life. He realised that idolatry confuses and exploits the people and makes the society complacent and cowardly. Through his speeches, dialogues and writings, Maharshi Dayanand strongly condemned idolatry as a futile practice and ordained the worship of one formless and all-pervading God as described in the second principle of Arya Samaj.

## DAYANAND'S UNCOMPROMISING STRUGGLE

### *Dayanand's Indomitable Courage*

Maharshi Dayanand's biographer, Devendranath Mukhopadhyaya points out that all the *Acharyas* and perhaps all the cult leaders of the country were in league with idolatry. But Dayanand, even at a risk to his life, and without any fear or worldly temptations, continued his struggle against idol worship. He was offered the *gaddi* of big temples and other allurements, but he did not deviate from his path. After his victory in the Kashi Shāstrārtha, a well known pandit from Kashi requested him, "You may continue to refute all other things except idolatry, then the Pandits of Kashi will declare you one of the Avatārs (incarnations) of the Hindus." Maharshi Dayanand replied, "I do not want this. I have come to propagate the truth as revealed in the Vedas."[23]

Parson K.J. Lucas, who heard Dayanand speak against idolatry in 1877 in Farrukhabad, notes:

> He (Dayanand) spoke against idol worship so emphatically and clearly and with conviction that I was astonished to see the public of Farrukhabad welcoming him. I asked him, 'If you are tied to the mouth of cannon and are told if you don't bow to *mūrti* you will be fired, then what will you say?" He replied, 'I will say, fire.' He was so fearless.[24]

Maharshi Dayanand was offered the *gaddi* of temple of Bhagwan Ekling by the Maharana of Udaipur on the condition of giving up the refutation of idolatry. He replied, "Should I fulfil your wish or obey the order of God?"[25]

Dayanand waged a lone battle against idol worship.[26] Pandits were defeated in the Shāstrārthas and the intelligent audiences were convinced to give up idolatry. Fearing a loss of their livelihood, the priests and managers of temples, rushed to Kashi to get a certificate from the pandits of Kashi in favour of idol worship. Maharshi Dayanand decided to demolish this fort of idolatry, and challenged the pandits of Kashi. A Shāstrārtha was then organised as per the orders of the Raja,[27] who himself became the mediator. According to the reports available, the discussion was not strictly related to the topic of idolatry, and the pandits digressed often to try and defeat Dayanand. The preface to the book on Kashi-Shāstrārtha clarifies -

1. Had there been any evidence in the Vedas in favour of idol worship, the pandits would have quoted that.
2. Without proving their case with evidence from the Vedas, they digressed and asked, 'Is Manusmriti Veda-based or not?'
3. They tried to prove idol worship by means of word *pratimā*, but did not succeed.

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4. Maharshi Dayanand held the word *Purāṇa* as '*Viśeṣaṇa*', the Kashi pandits as '*Viśesya*'. But they could not prove their case.[28]

The following mantra from Yajurveda supports the view point of Maharshi Dayanand:

*Na tasya pratimā'asti yasya nāma mahadyaśaḥ*[29]

Meaning "that God whose name is '*Mahadyashah*', has no idol. There is none and nothing like Him, no picture, no icon, no simile, no metaphor.[30]

The question arises – does this mantra carry '*na*' '*tasya*' as two separate words or '*natasya*' as a single word? The latter could cause confusion. Maharshi Dayanand clarifies that according to Svara-śāstra, generally there is one *udātta* in a word, but in '*na tasya*' two *udāttas* are shown, therefore '*na tasya*' are two separate words. Furthermore, Pandit Lekhram has pointed out that in this mantra, there are two pronouns related to each other. If '*na*' '*tasya*' is treated as one word '*natasya*', then the second word in this very mantra '*yasya*' would be meaningless. This '*yasya*' (whose) is relevant only when '*tasya*' (his) exists.

After the Kashi-Shāstrārtha, another Shāstrārtha on idol worship in Sanskrit was organised at Hugli (near Kolkata) on April 8, 1873.[31] In this Shāstrārtha, the words *purāṇa, pratimā, devālaya, deva-pūjā* were discussed. Maharshi Dayanand says '*pratimā pratimānāma*' – *Pratimā* is one by which *pramāṇa* or *parimāna* is done, such as '*pauv*' or 'half a *ser*', etc. Moreover, spoon (*chamas*), etc., in *yajña* are also called *pratimā*. Dayanand quotes Manu as evidence:

*Tulāmānaṁ pratimānaṁ sarvaṁ ca syātsulakṣitam. ṣaṭsu ca māseṣu punareva parīkṣayet.*[32]

Maharshi Dayanand holds the Purāṇas as unauthentic. Purāṇas describe idol worship in detail. These are called *Shiva, Brahmavaivarta, Bhāgavata*, etc., in modern language. Maharshi Dayanand accepts the word *Purāṇa* according to its literal meaning as 'old', and in book-form he holds Brāhamaṇa-granthas like Śatapatha, etc., as Purāṇas:

1. *Purābhavaṁ purābhavā vā purābhavaśca iti purāṇaṁ puraṇī purāṇaḥ.*
2. Brāhmaṇa granthas such as Śatapatha are Purāṇa. Shankarāchārya accepts Purāṇa as Brāhmaṇa or Brahma-vidyā in his Śārīraka Bhāshya and Upaniṣad Bhāshya.
3. The words *Devālaya, Devayātan, Devagar* and *Devamandir*, etc., mean Yajñāshālā (the place for conducting a Yajñā).
4. God and the Veda mantras are *deva* and *devatā* nothing else.[33]

In the life of Maharshi Dayanand, one finds plenty of debates, dialogues, Shāstrārthas and speeches on the non-Vedic origins of idol worship. The pandits tried in vain to defeat him, and when they could not do so, they even resorted to denouncing his stand in his absence. The astonishing instance of Arya Sanmārg Sandarśinī Sabhā, Calcutta (now, Kolkata) is especially worth mentioning:

> While Swami Dayanand was at Agra, a Sabha called the Arya Sanmārg Sandarśinī Sabhā, was established at Calcutta, with the object of having it decided and settled, once for all, by the most distinguished representatives of orthodoxy in

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> the land (that could be got hold of for the purpose, of course), that Dayanand's views on *Shrāddha, Tirtha,* Idol worship, etc., were entirely unorthodox and unjustifiable. Sanskrit scholars and *Reises* to the number of three hundred responded to the call of the Sabha, and a grand meeting, composed of the local men and of the outsiders, came off in the Senate Hall on 22nd January, 1881. It is significant that not one of the numerous distinguished pandits present, thought of suggesting or moving that the man upon whom the Sabha was going to sit in judgement, should also, in fairness, be summoned before the august tribunal, to be condemned or acquitted after he had been fully heard. It may be urged that the Sabha was not in humour to acquit Dayanand under any circumstances, but still he should have been permitted to have his say before he was condemned. Surely, one man could be dealt with very well by an assemblage so illustrious and so erudite. But the Pandits and their admirers were wise in their generation. Dayanand, though one, had proved too much for still a more learned and august gathering at Benares.[34]

The convener of this meeting was Pandit Mahesh Chandra Nyayaratna, a college Principal. Pandit Tara Nath Tarkvachaspati, Jivanand Vidyasagar B.A., Pandit Banke Bihari Vajpeyi and Yamuna Narayan Tiwari from Kanpur, Sudarshanacharya from Vrindavan and Pandit Ram Subramanyam Shashtri from Tanjore participated in this meeting. Hon. Yatindra Mohan Thakur C.S.I., Maharaj Kamal Krishna Bahadur, Raja Surendra Mohan Thakur C.S.I., Raja Rajendra Lal Malik, Babu Jayakishan Mukhopadhyaya, Kumar Devendra Malik, Babu Ram Chandra Malik, Babu Krishna Das Pal, Lala Narayan Das, Rai Badridas Lakhim Bahadur, Seth Jugal Kishore, Seth Naharmal and Seth Hans Raj, etc., were also present. Though Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and Babu Rajendra Lal Mitra L.L.D. could not participate in the meeting, yet they whole-heartedly accepted proceedings of the meeting. When all these gentlemen gathered in senate Hall, Pandit Mahesh Chandra Nyayaratna spoke about the purpose of meeting and posed five questions.

The second of the five questions raised and answered by the prominent Pandits, was on idol worship – Is the worship of idols of Śiva, Viṣṇu, Durgā, etc., shrāddha of the dead *pitras,* bathing in the Ganga and at Kurukshetra etc., and residing at *tīrthas* proper or improper, according to the shāstras?[35]

Answer: Worshipping the idols of gods is right and proper according to all the *Śrutis* and *Smritis.*[36] It is clear and decided that *Śruti* and *Smriti* both accept shrāddha of the dead.[37] Benefits of bathing in Ganga and residing at Kurukshetra etc., are proven by *Śruti* and *Smriti.*[38]

Subrahmanyam Shastri quoted mantra from Ṛgveda:

*Tava śriye maruto marjayanta rudra yatte janima cāru citram.*[39]

He claimed that it validates the worship of Shiva-linga and the rewards resulting from it. It was further claimed Rāmtāpini and Brihajjābāl Upaniṣads also mention the worship of Shiva-linga. Manusmriti was quoted too:

*Nityaṁ snātvā śuciḥ kuryāddevarṣipitṛtarpaṇam.*
*Devatābhyarcanaṁ caiv, samidādhānameva ca.*[40]

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Evidence from Deval Smriti, Ṛgveda Gṛhya Pariśiṣṭa and Boudhāyana Sūtra was also given. Efforts were made to prove idol worship by quoting shlokas from Manusmriti – *Simāsandhiṣu...*'[41] and '*Sankramdhwajayaṣṭīnām...*'.[42] In the end, the Pandits unanimously approved a motion in favour of idolatry.

As Maharshi Dayanand was busy with the task of *Vedabhāshya,* a rejoinder was released by Lala Sain Das, Secretary Arya Samaj, Lahore. He articulated the views of Maharshi Dayanand. Briefly, the response covered the following points:

The Vedas are authentic on their own, while it is not so in case of other books. The evidence given in support of idol worship is either irrelevant or incorrect. Maharshi Dayanand clearly mentions that in tenth khaṇḍ of fifth anuvāk of Sāmaveda Brāhmaṇa '*Sa parandiv...*' etc., the context of god-idols is of Brahmloka.[43]

Quoting Manu in support of idol worship,[44] it had been stated that the temples should be constructed between two villages and idols must be kept there. Examining this it was clarified that in context of temples on the village borders, the words denoting pond, well, *bāwarī,* etc., have been used. Later, the construction of temples came into vogue, which is a tradition contrary to shāstras. The response further stated that evidence in support of idol worship should be from those very shāstras which Maharshi Dayanand has quoted in refutation of idol worship.

The mantra from Ṛgveda claimed as evidence in support of *Shiva-linga sthāpanā* is irrelevant as the word '*marjayanta*' in the mantra is derived from root *mrij* which means to purify, to decorate and to sound. It does not mean to worship, but to sing in praise of God.

Lastly, the response quoted Veda mantras as evidence against idol worship.

*Na tasya pratimā'asti yasya nāma mahadyaśaḥ*

That God has no idol whose name is quite scintillating.

*Sa paryagācchukramakāyamavraṇamasnāviraṁ śuddhamapāpaviddham*[45]

He is never embodied, is never liable to division, and has no nervous or arterial systems. He is pure and never commits a sin.

*Andhantamaḥ praviśanti ye'sambhūtimupāsate,*
*Tato bhūya'iva te tamo ya'u sambhūtyāṁ ratāḥ*[46]

Those who worship inert objects like *prakṛti* – the material cause of the world, enter hell and those who worship visible things born of the *prakṛti* enter a hell full of more darkness.

*Tamātmasthaṁ ye'nupaśyanti dhīrāsteṣāṁ sukhaṁ śāśvataṁ netareṣām.*[47]

The intelligent people, who see Him enshrined in the soul, find perpetual contentment, and not the others.

*Tato taduttarataraṁ tadarūpamanāmayam.*
*Ya etadviduramṛtāste bhavantyathetare duḥkhamevāpi yānti.*[48]

He, who is higher than the creation and material cause of creation, is formless and faultless. Those who know Him, become eternal and the others are only entangled in pain.

*Tameva viditvāti mṛtyumeti nānyaḥ panthā vidyate'yanāya*[49]

Only through the knowledge of Him, one gets relief from death. There is no other way.

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No god deserves worship. In Śatapatha Brāhamaṇa 33 devatās are explained, but no worship is prescribed for any devatā except the Supreme God.

*Ātmetyevopāsīta. Sa yo'nyamātmanaḥ priyaṁ bruvāṇaṁ brūyātpriyaṁ rotsyatīśvato ha tathaiva syāt. Yo'nyāṁ devatāmupāste na sa veda yathā paśurevaṁ se devānām.*[50]

Only God is worth worshipping. One who worships anything other than God is destined to fall into sorrow. He, who worships other devatās, is ignorant of reality. Certainly, he is like an animal among intelligent people.

The response thus provided a fitting reply to all the points raised by the pandits at Calcutta. This was just one example of the Vedic wisdom silencing the advocates of idolatry, once Dayanand had bugled the true meaning of the Vedas.

We are indebted indeed to Dayanand for pointing out and re-establishing the truth in modern times, that idol worship has no sanction of the Vedas and *Ārṣa* granthas.

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4. *Amarkoṣa, kāṇḍa* 3, *varga* 3, *shloka* 66
5. *Yajurveda,* 32.3
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7. वतो देवता चन्द्रमा देवता।
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19. *Yajurveda,* 40.8
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27. For more details on Kashi Shāstrārtha and other Shāstrārthats of Swami Dayanand on Idol worship, see Somdev Shatanshu and Brahmadev Vidyalankar, *Shāstrārthas of Swami Dayanand,* chapter 5, pp. 54-68.
28. Swami Dayanand, 2012, *Kashi Shāstrārtha, Dayanand Granthmālā,* part-3, Vaidik Pustkalaya, Ajmer, pp. 451-452.
29. *Yajurveda,* 32.3; न तस्य प्रतिमाऽअस्ति यस्य नाम महद्यशः।
30. This mantra, however, could not be quoted in Kashi Shāstrārtha as the Kashi pandits tried to avoid discussion on regular lines.
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36. *Ibid.*, p. 645.
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41. *Ibid.*, 8.248
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44. Manu, 8.248, 9.285
45. *Yajurveda,* 40.8; स पर्य्यगाच्छुक्रमकायमव्रणमस्नाविरं शुद्धमपापविद्धम्।
46. *Ibid.,* 40.9; अन्धन्तमः प्रविशन्ति येऽसम्भूतिमुपासते। ततो भूयऽइव ते तमो यऽउ सम्भूत्यां रताः।।
47. *Kaṭhopaniṣad,* 2.2.12; तमात्मस्थं येऽनुपश्यन्ति धीरास्तेषां सुखं शाश्वतं नेतरेषाम्।
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49. *Yajurveda,* 31.18; तमेव विदित्वाऽति मृत्युमेति नान्यः पन्था विद्यतेऽयनाय।
50. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa,* 14.4.2.18-19,22; आत्मेत्येवोपासीत। स योऽन्यमात्मनः प्रियं ब्रुवाणं ब्रूयात्प्रियं रोत्स्यतीश्वरो ह तथैव स्यात्। योऽन्यां देवतामुपास्ते न स वेद यथा पशुरेवं स देवानाम्।

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# CHAPTER 39

# Traitavāda: Its Vedic Basis

*Gyan Prakash Shastri*

This universe, infinite in its expanse and multifarious in its form, is unlikely to be confined in any way. In this limitless expanse, man, endowed with the gift of reason, has embarked on a journey to transcend his own boundaries, so as to reach out towards perfection. While the other beings have sensory perceptions, and some even have brains, the humans have a prerogative over others in terms of their ability to question, introspect and reason.

Man has always grappled with the questions related to his self, his origin and his purpose as a being. Who am I? Where have I come from? Is the world is a reality, or the mere manifestation of a dream? Such questions have profoundly quizzed him, down the ages, to the extent that the world appears to be a riddle whose understanding is deeply and gravely confounded to his analysis. Expounding the gravity of the riddle, *Nāsadīya sūkta* affirms that none can comprehend or explain the origin of creation (in its entirety). The devas (learned persons) too, are clueless of its nature, as they too emerged after this inscrutable creation.[1] The question emerges as to who can then ascertain its knowledge and nature? *Nāsadīya sūkta* tries to resolve the issue by offering an explanation, stating that the creator or the master of this creation is in fact in the state of *Parama Vyoma,* beyond time and state.[2] *Vyoma* means space, thus *Vyoma* indicates the *sky* – the infinite void which is not gross *sthūla* but subtle *sukṣma. Parama Vyoma* is beyond the gross *sthūla,* or in other words, it is the state upon which the very existence of the gross *sthūla* sky is dependent. The entity upon which the very unseen and indiscernible is dependent is *Parama Vyoma,* which can also be addressed as or termed the Supreme Power of existence.

The curiosity to unravel the mystery around the existence of creation, apparent in the *Nāsadīya sūkta,* can also be seen in the *rishi* of *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad* and in his desire

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to answer some questions such as the following. Is *Brahma* the creator? Or who is our creator, nourisher and protector? And under whose care and superintendence do we, the seekers of knowledge pass through this mixed order of pleasure and pain?[3]

The method of unravelling the mysteries of creation lies in establishing compatibility and a connection with the creation itself. It is only through this identification that we can ascertain the truth. The knowledge has been revealed in seed form in the Vedas which expound the mysteries of creation in their treatment upon the *Īśvara*, the creator. Using this divine gift of the absolute knowledge, the Vedas, the Vedic *rishis* or sages could, by establishing an identification with the creator, the God, arrive at the truth, and have secured it for the generations to come.

Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati, the pioneer of Indian renaissance, has established the cosmic truth based on the exposition of the Vedas. He clearly affirms the existence of three principal or eternal entities as the base formulation of creation.

## THREE ETERNAL ENTITIES

Maharshi Dayanand maintains that three entities are eternal – the creator God (*Īśvara*), the being (*jīvātmā*), and *prakṛti*, i.e., the material cause of creation. The nature, functions and qualities of these three eternals are also eternal.[4] The entire creation is comprised of these three fundamental and eternal entities. This philosophy has been termed as *Traitavāda* or Traitism or the philosophy of Trinity.

*Traitavāda* has ever been the subject of discourse in the Vedic thought, Upaniṣads, Gita etc., but to Swami Dayanand Saraswati goes the credit of affirming it in modern times, as the correct Vedic position. He affirms *Īśvara* (God or creator), *jīva* (the being) and *prakṛti* (nature) as the three eternal entities in the act of creation, which according to him gets manifested with these three and finally dissolves into its absolute basic form at the time of cataclysm. Of these three, *Īśvara* the creator or God is the efficient causative factor, *prakṛti* is the productive factor, whereas, the causative factor motivating the act of creation is the *jīva*, for whom it is effectuated. Creation is not for the personal use of *Īśvara*, and *prakṛti* being inert in form is a non-consumer, thereby leaving only *jīva* (beings or *jīvātmā*, spiritual beings), the reason for manifesting the creation.

Here it should be observed that the concept of a Vedic philosophy did not have an established form prior to Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati. Though, all the theist communities entitle the *sui genesis* of their belief system to the Vedas, they did not have any established treatises of Philosophy of the Vedas as such, and Dayanand Saraswati established it, in a clear and convincing fashion. Had the ground footing of *Traitavāda*, philosophy of Trinity not been rooted in the Vedas, its unobjectionable acceptance would have been difficult. Therefore, Maharshi pursued the Vedic thought and deeply analysed the Vedas before embarking upon formulating the philosophical treatise of *Traitavāda*, (philosophy of Trinity) leading to its unobjectionable and whole hearted acceptance. He quotes Ṛgveda to support his argument in the following mantra:

*Dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāyā samānaṁ vṛkṣaṁ pari ṣasvajāte,*

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*Tayoranyaḥ pippalaṁ svādvattyanaśnannanyo abhi cākaśīti.*[5]

This mantra describes a tree and two birds respectively. One of the birds is feasting on the delights of the fruits of the tree; the other is merely a witness to it. In the given mantra, the tree symbolises *prakṛti*; it is a power or energy ever on transformation and therefore liable to change. The two birds on the tree, *ātmā* (spirit) and *Paramātmā* (Supreme Spirit, God) are friends and allies bearing many similarities, but still having dissimilar or distinct entities. Where on one hand, one is limited and confined; the other is all-pervasive, boundless and immanent; one has limited awareness, the other is sagacious and omniscient; one is ever in the quest of bliss, while the other is bliss manifested. The Vedic mantra establishing the affinity between the two, denominates them on the grounds of participant or experiencer and witness of the experiencer. Thus *jīva* is the participant in the act of relishing the tree of *prakṛti*, while the other *Īśvara* is the corroborator of the one relishing the fruit of tree of *prakṛti*. Where on one hand the mantra establishes parallelism between the *jīva* and *Īśvara*; it also tends to singularise their peculiarities.

Maharshi quotes from the *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad* to establish the essence of eternal in the three – *prakṛti*, *jīva* (being) and *Īśvara* (creator):

*Ajāmekāṁ lohitaśuklakṛṣṇāṁ bahvīḥ prajāḥ sṛtamānāṁ svarūpāḥ.*
*Ajo hyeko juṣamāṇo'nuśete jahātyenāṁ bhuktabhogāmajo'nyaḥ.*[6]

The term, *aja* has been used thrice in this mantra and is associated with *prakṛti*, described as *ajā* and endowed with three *guṇa* or traits – *lohita*, scarlet (*rajas* trait of passion), *Śukla* (*sattva* trait of purity and goodness) and *kṛṣṇa*, dark (*tamas* trait of darkness). Through these three traits, it has the potential to procreate, and the creatures feasting on this eternal *aja*, or *prakṛti* get trapped by its relish, whereas, the *Īśvara*, the creator or God, being a mere witness remains detached, therefore liberated of the relish.

Of the three entities, only *prakṛti* has the potential to get manifested and acquire form out of formless, whereas the *ātman*, the spirit and *Paramātmā*, the Supreme Spirit, the God or creator, do not get manifested. Here the question arises, as to what leads *avyakta prakṛti* – the formless, to get *vyakta* – acquire form or manifestation? Answering the question, the rishi of *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad* states that the sages have, in their states of deep meditation, experienced and witnessed the power of *Paramātmā* (Supreme Spirit), who alone is the presider over the eight *kāraṇa* (factors); which include *kāla* (age or era), *svabhāva* (character or disposition), *niyati* (destiny), *bhūta* (time), *yoni* (progeny) and *puruṣa* (man) etc. In other words, these eight enact and command under his control.[7]

Describing the *Brahmachakra*, the wheel of divinity, the sage of *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad* further comments that the entire *prakṛti* is the circumference of that *Brahma* engulfed by the *trivrata*, the tri-orb of *sattva, rajas and tamasa*. The wheel has sixteen lobes including (*pañcamahābhūta*), the five gross material constituents, fifty spokes [*avidyā, asmitā* (pride - egoism), *rāga* (attachment), *dveṣa* (malice), *abhiniveṣa* (a sort of ignorance causing fear of death)], and includes six *aṣṭaka* or octaves. The *viśvarupa* (form of creation) is a cycle with the three stages of *utpatti* (creation), *sthiti*

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(existence) and *pralaya* (doom) triggered by the *śubha* (good/auspicious) and *aśubha* (evil/inauspicious). Such is the truth seen by the sages in their deep seat of *Samādhi* or meditation.[8]

As we have noted, Vedic philosophy considers the three entities *Īśvara,* (the creator) *jīva* (the creature or being) and *prakṛti,* to be eternal. Since all these three are distinct, a deliberation to understand each, is as follows:

## ĪŚVARA

Describing the form of Īśvara, the creator or God, the Ṛgveda mentions Him to be endowed with all the *divya guṇa* (divine and supernal traits), *karma* (deeds), *svabhāva* (disposition or character) and *vidyā* (knowledge). He is vast, comprehensive and boundless like the sky and is the supreme God of all the gods. Knowledge or awareness is futile for those who know Him not, but those who know Him, attain Him.[9]

The Yajurveda refers to the formulator and regulator of this creation *Īśvara* (God) as *īśa* stating Him to be pervasive and omnipresent, and that nothing is devoid of His existence. He pervades all and everything.[10] *Īśvara,* the creator Himself asserts that He is at the beginning of everything, or in other words He was even before anything visible existed. He says – Therefore, I am my creation's lord; giver of all the riches and wealth of the world; as people evoke their father, similarly, I too am evoked to provide and gratify their pleasures and delights.[11] I am Indra, beyond death and defeat, creator of all the wealth of creation. People should not dissociate their connection with me but should implore to seek my company, so as to be showered with wealth of all kinds.[12] I grant knowledge to the seeker, illumine the Vedas that extol my account or delineation, lead the worshipper to his advancement and overthrow the non-worshipper.[13]

Īśvara has been extolled in such a manner as a supra-form in the Vedic delineation that His realiser gets Divine bliss. He is omnipresent, governing His creation. He stands at the beginning of the cause of creation, preceded by none. He is invoked by humans in distress but only the deserving, realise Him. He is the death of the death; therefore, people should seek Him, as He is the sole giver of knowledge, leading to awakening and liberation. Thus, the one unprecedented supreme power that grants everything to humans is *Paramātmā* (Supreme Spirit).

In *Śatapatha Brāhamaṇa,* Yājñavalkya says to his wife Gārgī: Hey Gārgī! the Brahmans or the sages who have experienced the divine presence of the creator, Īśvara, describe Him to be free and beyond the *sthūla,* gross; *sūkṣama,* the subtle; *laghu,* atomic; *lāl,* red; *sneha,* affectionate; *chāyā,* shadowy; *andhakāra,* dark; *vāyu,* wind; *ākāśa,* space; *sanga,* associated; *śabda,* word or *sparśa,* touch; *gandha,* smell; *rasa,* relish (taste); *netra,* eyes; *karṇa,* ears; *mana,* mind; *teja,* splendour or magnificence; *prāṇa,* prāṇic energy or vital energy; *mukha,* mouth; *nāma,* name; *gotra,* clan; *vriddhāvasthā,* aged; *maraṇa,* dead; *bhaya,* fear; *ākāra,* form; *vikāra,* change of form or nature; *sankoca,* withdrawal; *pūrva,* precedent; *apar,* succedent; *bhītar,* within or inside; and *bāhar* out side. In other words, He is above and beyond all these *doṣa,* imperfection or blemishes and *guṇa,* virtues or merits and is *mokṣasvarūpa,* ever-free and the bestower of salvation. His presence is

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unlike any material form, therefore, He cannot be known either through senses or reason, as He is beyond the subject of senses.[14] It can be concluded that the knowledge of *Īśvara* cannot be confined to the sensory perceptions and He remains unaffected by the physical and natural variations.

In *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad,* Yājñavalkya replies to sage Gautama's questions on the nature of the creator that the One pervading *pṛthvī,* the earth; *jala,* water; *agni,* fire; *antarikṣa,* space; *vāyu,* air; *dyuloka* and *āditya,* sun; yet remaining distinct from them, is the omnipresent. Similarly, the One Who pervades the *diśā,* the directions; *chandramā,* the moon; *ākāśa,* the sky; *tamas,* darkness; and *tejas,* radiant; but is still distinct from them is the almighty, omnipresent, God.[15] The description not only confirms that the One Who resides in the eternal elements of *prakṛti,* yet is distinct from them is the Supreme Soul, God, but also affirms a stark distinction between the *prakṛti* and *paramātmā.*

The *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad* speaking of *Īśvara,* states that He has no hands, yet creates everything with His potential; has no feet, yet is expansive, pervading every form being swift; has no eyes, yet sees everything; has no ears, yet listens to every minute sound; does not have a limited self, yet is omniscient. He knows all, but none can comprehend Him fully. He is the eternal *puruṣa,* highest, complete and perfect. He performs all His functions by His own inherent natural potential without using any instrument.[16] the *triguṇa* form of nature creates its perceivable forms in the universe, but God creates none like Himself. None is either His equal or His superior. His prodigious energy, knowledge, power and deeds are innate or natural with which He creates, establishes and destroys the universe.[17]

Where on one hand *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad* describes the nature and functions of *Īśvara,* on the other hand *Kaṭhopaniṣad* glorifying His splendour, states – the One Whose glory the Vedas sing, for Whom *tapa* or religious austerities are performed, and to attain Whom people follow the path of *Brahmacharya* or renunciation, He is none other than *Aum.*[18] He is imperishable, immortal *Brahma, paramākṣara Brahma.* Anyone who meditates upon the *Brahma* gets his wishes fulfilled. His recumbence enables one to attain the bliss of *Brahmaloka.* This description establishes the notion that all the *japa, tapa* and *yajña* rites and austerities performed by the people are in fact manifested towards the *Aum* referred to by rishis in the verses. This *Brahma* is the *sādhya* – attainable, whereas *prakṛti* is the means to that attainment and *jīva* (the being) works for that attainment.

The three eternal entities get established again in the process of an Upaniṣadic investigation.[19] The sage of the *Kaṭhopaniṣad* summarises the essence of his meditation by saying that *Paramātmā,* the Supreme Spirit, is beyond the verbal and sensory perception. He is formless, immortal and eternal; cannot be tasted or subjected to smell; is the minutest of the minute atomic form, whose knowledge or realisation liberates mortals from the shackles of death.[20] He singlehandedly controls all beings and *prakṛti,* and only those who realise Him in the deepest core of their hearts are blissful.[21] These words of *Kaṭhopaniṣad's* affirm that the sole *paramātmā,* provides multifarious forms (bodies) to *jīvātmās* associating them with the *prakṛti.* And only those

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who perceive Him in their hearts, find peace and happiness. Thus *Traitavāda* is reflected at every step in Vedic literature.

*Yogadarśana,* describing the nature and character of *Īśvara,* affirms Him to be a *puruṣa-viśeṣa Īśvara* Who is not bound or touched by the five sufferings like *Avidyā,* sensual pleasures, and good or bad actions or their desires, and is complete. He possesses eternal and all-round wisdom and is the pinnacle of infinite qualities like knowledge. His capacities know no limits as He is Omnipotent. He is the master, the preceptor of truth to the entire mankind beginning from the first created being to the ones to be created. Having proclaimed and established the nature of truth through the Vedas for all the generations to come, He is the *Īśvara* and is also therefore, the guru.[22] *Yogadarśana* tries to thus establish a sketch of *Īśvara,* as the One devoid of sufferings, free of desires and fruit of *karma* or deeds. He was, is and will be the guru, the teacher or the preceptor of all the rishis and sages of the world. He is eternal and anyone attuned to Him or one who acquires identification with His being, will be blessed with His awareness.

## JĪVĀTMĀ

As opposed to *Īśvara,* who is omniscient, *jīvātmā* (individual soul or being) is limited in its knowledge, and infinitesimally small. It is genderless, and is not subjected to death itself, but attains bodily rebirth as it is *karma*-bound. The *jīvātmās* are multiple in number. Where on the one hand the Supreme God pervades the universe, on the other hand *jīva* attains bodily form. Ṛgveda speaks of *jīvātmā* or the being's peculiar feature of attaining a body, and seeks to know - who is the one that first sees, the subtle *jīvātmā* attaining a gross body-form. It states that body is comprised of seven entities such as *sthūla* (gross), *prāṇa* (vital), *sūkṣma* (subtle) and *rudhira* (blood) etc. It also questions, as to which guru or teacher should be approached to seek knowledge about all this.[23] The mantra proves that it is *jīvātmā* that enters the body-form not the *paramātmā.*

In another mantra, the *jīvātmā,* owing to its self-confessed immaturity, seeks to know from the *kavi* (the poet or the sage, in the Vedic context), the meaning embodied in the text describing the seven subtle elements comprising the body-form. It questions the poets, if *paramātmā,* has ever been one with His created gross form.[24] Since these are questions posed by ignorant *jīva,* it proves that in the Vedas, *jīvātmā* is not regarded as omniscient like *Īśvara,* but is in fact declared the possessor of limited knowledge.

According to the Vedas, *jīvātmā* is *bhoktā* i.e., enjoyer by nature. Ṛgveda affirms *jīva* as the junior and a brother of its immanent rearer or nourisher, *Īśvara.* It states the third among the brethren is the watery part or form i.e., *prakṛti* also known as *Aditi* having seven sons. *Paramātmā* is the nourisher or giver of life-sustaining food to every *jīva* who is the *bhoktā* or relisher, whereas, the third among the brethren, the *prakṛti,* through its seven sons – *mahata, ahankāra* and *pañca tanmātrā,* is executing the worldly. *Prakṛti* is referred to as *ghṛtapṛṣṭha* meaning there cannot be life without *ghṛta* or water.[25] Another mantra, quoted earlier, also mentions *jīva* to be a bird feasting or relishing the fruits atop a tree - the *prakṛti.*[26]

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Describing the dimensions of *ātmā* (spirit) and *Paramātmā* (Supreme Spirit), the Atharvaveda states that one (*jīvātmā*) is minuter than hair and the other (*paramātmā*) is to be seen almost like 'nothingness' or is beyond vision. He has embraced every form, therefore, is dear to me.[27] Where on the one hand *jivātmā* can be perceived without being seen, on the other hand it is very difficult to perceive *paramātmā*, therefore, the *mantras* have described Him as beyond vision or perception.

*Jīvātmā* and *Paramātmā* neither die nor age. *Jīvātmā,* residing in the body, performs deeds and finally leaves when the body becomes worn out. The Atharvaveda states that the Spirit is latent in the frail body performing all the functions remaining fresh as ever, but departs at the frailty of body.[28] *Jīvātma* is devoid of fixed gender and age. One cannot perceive the true nature of *jīvātmā* looking at its existent form. The Atharvaveda glorifies its nature stating, thou art woman, thou art man; thou art boy, thou art girl. It is you who sometimes becoming aged and walk supported by a staff. It is you who take birth in various forms sometimes becoming father, at other son. Thus is he who takes various forms of life in many births.[29]

***Punarjanma (Rebirth)***

*Īśvara* does not have desires; rather His will is done. Hence, the cycle of birth and death cannot entrap Him in its fold. As the mind functions in the thinking process of *jīvātmā,* some of its desires remain unfulfilled even after passing through various life forms. The Ṛgveda, describing the rebirth of *jīvātmā,* questions as to who bestows good parents to us yet again in a new birth? The mantra replies that among the devas, *agni,* lord of energy – Almighty God is the one to bless us with family.[30] *Agni* is the one who leads all souls - *devayānies,* the ones returning after attaining *mokṣa* (salvation) as well as *Pitryānis,* the ones fettered by the desires, back to the pathway of *punarjanma* (rebirth).

The Yajurveda expresses the hope for a pious mind that is skilled in the art of leading a righteous life, so that the soul bathes in the light of freedom, every time it returns. Elsewhere, the Yajurveda states that *jīva,* on leaving their bodies, perambulating air and other entities, finally acquire a womb, so as to attain the body, destined for them at that time.[31] Chāndogya offers a similar description of the souls traversing on the *Pitryānamārga,* so as to attain a new life form.[32]

Dayanand, commenting on one of the mantras of the Yajurveda, says the same about *jīva's* journey, which upon attaining a new life form, indulges in reaping fruits of the good and bad deeds already done.[33] Sāmkhyakārikā opines that *sūkṣmaśarīra* or the subtle body does not stay a minute out or without the *sthūlaśarīra* gross body.[34] A similar belief finds mention in the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad as well.[35] But Vedic belief is distinct from these and opines that *jīva* acquires body, journeying various levels. This is supported by Gita and Nirukta as well.[36] Chāndogyopaniṣad too reaffirms this belief.[37]

*Paramātmā* is singular whereas, *jīvātmā* are numerous or countless. Various mantras refer to *jīvātmā* in plural.[38] But *Brahma, Parabrahma* or *Paramātmā* always finds mention in singular, as is in the given mantra.

*Sa paryagācchukramakāyamavraṇamasnāviraṁ śuddhamapāpaviddham.*
*Kavirmanīṣī paribhūḥ svayambhūryāthātathyato'rthān vyadadhācchāśvatībhyaḥ samābhyaḥ.*[39]

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In this mantra, the terms, '*sa* (that Supreme Spirit), *śukram* (radiant), *akāyam* (without a form), *asnāviram* (without a nervous system), *śuddham* (sacred), *apāpaviddham* (devoid of evil), *kavi* (poet), *manīṣī* (thoughtful) etc., bear singular connotations. It can be concluded that the denotation of power and authority in the mantra offers singular signification to *Brahma,* whereas, plural denotation signifies *jīvātmā.* Moreover, the term *Brahma* has never been used to denote *jīva,* which goes on to confirm the difference between *jīvātmā* and *paramātmā.* The difference is grounded on the knowledge that *jīvātmā* acquires rebirth owing to the fruit of its good or bad deeds, whereas *paramātmā* is liberated from the cycle of life and death.

## PRAKṚTI

The Vedas ascribe various denotations to *prakṛti* such as, *asat* (unmanifested), *svadhā* (self-sustained), *tamas* (darkness), *māyā* (illusion), and *aditi* (indivisible) etc. The first three denotations are mentioned together in one hymn of *Nāsadīya sūkta.*

***Asat (Untrue or False):***

*Nāsadīya sūkta* describing *asat* states that there was neither *sat* (truth, existence) nor *asat* (untruth, nonexistence).[40] Maharshi Vyāsa the commentator of Yogasūtra expounding upon the nature and character of *sat* and *asat* states that *prakṛti* cannot be '*asat*' as it is not absent; but the absence of denoting indication, disclaims it as *sat.*[41] The existence of *prakṛti* is signified by the karma-related experiencing by the *jīvātmā* and the liberation thereof. Before creation, in *pralayavasthā* (the dissolute form), activity is abandoned by *puruṣa* and *jīvātmā.* This proves that *prakṛti* is *paramārtha sat,* being for the active use by life forms of *jivātmā;* and is also *asat* as it is denied the function of *paramārtha* during *pralaya.*

The Vedas do not affirm the notion of *sat* and *asat* in the state of *pralaya,* the universal dissolution or cataclysm, whereas, Chāndogyopaniṣad identifies cataclysm to be *asat.*[42] Acharya Shankara describing *asat* states that the world at the pre-stage (or pre-creation stage) bore its essence as Nāmarūpa (in the form of His name) and was not in the state of nothingness.[43] He opined the creation to be *asat,* as in the state of being formless, not *abhāvarūpa* or privative.[44] In state of complete darkness, the world though *sat* appears to be *asat* or invisible; similarly, in the state of *pralaya* (the state of universal dissolution or cataclysm,) nature appears to be *asat,* though it is *sat.*[45] It is on this ground that the sage of *Chāndogya* affirms the peerless *asat* at pre-stage which later led to the creation of the '*sat*'.[46]

Sūkta 10.72 of the Ṛgveda describing the '*sat*' creation from '*asat*' states, as blacksmith fires the flames, similarly, Brahmaṇaspati inspires '*asat*' to become '*sat*'.[47] At the pre-stage, they were located in restive, rather sportive state of the lustrous sun and other Gods.[48] The elements of '*sat*' were rightfully established in the homogeneous way, meaning thereby, that everything was rapt or engrossed in its being or entity. The sage of Nāsadīya sūkta appropriates the truth by affirming, *Sato bandhumasti niravindan.*[49] Both *sat* and *asat* are complementary, therefore being affiliated they cannot be severed

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from each other.[50] From the absence of cognisable state of matter the cognisable and manifested world has come in to presence. This means *sat* - visible creation was latently present in *asat* - indiscernible primordial matter. Thus *sat* and *asat* are not two separated entities, rather are two sides of the same coin, where *asat* stands for the primal or rudimentary root cause and '*sat*', a conjugation or deformation, which affirms that *sat* relies on *asat.*

***Svadhā (Self-Position or Self-Power or Inherent Power)***

The Vedas clarify the state of cataclysm, stating that even in that state, He was present with his *Svadhā* before the existence of *vāyu*, air etc., and there existed nothing better than Him.[51] In this illustration, the existence of *Brahma* has been accepted, and the existence of *prakṛti* has been highlighted too, using the term *Svadhā. Īśvara* coexists with *svadhā* during *pralaya*, the period of cataclysm, whereas, *svadhā* does not have any essential role in *pralayakāla*, the cataclysmic state. The mantra refers to the term, '*avātam*' to denote this. When the beings are in the state of *supta* or profound sleep, detached from the body, they do not have any need of the five elements, and these elements such as air etc., come to fore at the time of creation. The mantra also states that the *jīvātmā* (spiritual beings) are dependent on the *pañcatattva* (five elements), whereas, *Īśvara* is detached from them and is not dependent on the energy of *prakṛti*, either during the state of cataclysm or creation.

***Tamas (Darkness or Dullness or Inertia)***

The previous two mantras of *Nāsadīya sūkta* negate the dualistic deportment of the functioning of the universe based on *asat* (untrue) and *sat* (true), *rajas* (passion) and *paramavyoma* (ether) or *mṛtyu* (death) and *amṛta* (immortality), *rātri* (night) and *divas* (day) etc. This leads to the question - what then was in that state? It has been answered as follows:

*Tama āsīttamasā gūḷhamgre'praketaṁ salilaṁ sarvamā idam.*[52]

Meaning: At that time *prakṛti* was engulfed by *andhkāra* or darkness. On the question of why nature is referred to as *tamas*, it is said that owing to its tendency to spread, it has been called so, since, nature is endowed with the ability to manifest from the state of formlessness to form. Manusmṛti too mentions *prakṛti*, as *tamas.*[53] According to the Vaiśeṣika School of philosophy, the bimultiplier continues multiplying indefinitely, and this quality of *prakṛti* is expressed by *tamas.*

***Māyā (Enchantress or Temptress or Illusion)***

The term māyā is basically associated with the one who tempts or enchants and often finds mention in the Vedas.[54] But Sāyaṇa interprets the term *māyayā* in the 10.177.1 verse of the Ṛgveda as, *triguṇātmikā* (trifold) quality of *prakṛti.* The term māyā has the connotation of an enchantress or temptress for the lay person, whereas in philosophy it connotes to ignorance, blindfolding the beings, thereby limiting their vision to the manifested world and obstructing the un-manifested world. Since it has the tendency to

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create an illusion by covering the reality of the transitory world, to evoke the feeling of its reality, it is termed māyā by the Vedas.

***Aditi (Unrefuted or Imperishable)***

The Ṛgveda appropriates *Aditi* to *prakṛti*. It is stated about *Aditi* that it is everything such as *dyuloka, antarikṣa, mātā, pitā, putra, samast devagaṇa,* human beings, what was and what is.[55] It is *prakṛti* that is manifested in all these varied forms, like *dyuloka* (earth), *antarikṣa* (sky), *mātā* (mother), *pitā* (father) etc. *Prakṛti* is also attributed with the tendency to consume, intake or embrace everything - hence too, it is *Aditi*.[56] It can be concluded that the form of nature that embraces everything in it, and thereby transforms the manifested or visible into un-manifested or invisible, is *prakṛti*. Basically *Aditi* means *akhaṇḍita* (unrefuted) and *avināśi* (imperishable).[57] *Prakṛti* is termed imperishable owing to the fact that its basic ingredients too, are imperishable.

On the basis of the mentioned significations of *prakṛti*, to *asat, tamas* etc., it can be drawn that *prakṛti* was entitled '*asat*' prior to creation because of it being inexpressive. It is *Svadhā* because of its being held by the Creator and is *tamas* because of its capacity to assume enormous size out of the minutest atomic and sub-atomic proportions. Above all, the creator is one and unchangeable, whereas *prakṛti* assumes multifarious forms changing at every phase like a protean, taking varied forms to tempt, it therefore appears to the thinkers and the wise as a temptress, an enchantress, and is labelled as *māyā*. As it creates multifarious forms from the minute atomic structures, it also has the ability to transform the enormous *Brahmanḍa* (the universe) back to formlessness. It is owing to its capacity and attributes to transform formlessness to manifestation and back to formlessness, that the Vedas have assigned it as *Aditi*.

***The Character or Disposition of Prakṛti***

The Yajurveda states that uncreated *prakṛti*, devours the created at cataclysm.[58] The mantra refers to *prakṛti* as *aja*, the uncreated that devours the entire creation. The philosophy of *Satkāryavāda* affirms that an entity dissolves into its very cause of element of genesis,[59] as a pot made of clay eventually merges back into the clay. Hence it seems logical that world that emerges out of *prakṛti*, finally dissolves into it.

***The Nature and Function of Prakṛti***

A mantra of the Yajurveda affirms that the creation created by *Brahma*, eventually dissolves as per His scheme into itself. The eternal *Brahma* is distinct from both the *prakṛti* and the beings. Thus *prakṛti* is multifarious in form and whatever it creates, finally dissolves into it at the appropriate time as per His regulation.[60]

***The Distress or Misery in the Worship of Prakṛti***

Those who worship the inert elemental world and accept the transient subtle gross dissimulation as their god or deity are bound to fall prey to misery and distress owing to ignorance. Therefore, only the *Satcidānanda* should be worshipped as the *Paramātmā* or Supreme Spirit.[61]

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*Prakṛti,* is the mother of this world, as she leads to its creation. But the Vedas caution us against its worship, as that leads to ignorance. The Yajurveda expounds this categorically stating that worshipping both the manifested or explicit and the un-manifested or latent forms of *prakṛti* leads one to ignorance and gloom. Sāmkhya warns that the one engrossed in the worship of gross elemental form of nature gets entrapped into the enslaved cycle of life and death.[62] Yogadarśana mentions such Yogis as engrossed in *prakṛti.* Vyāsa too refers to them as *prakṛtilaya,* those entrapped in nature, who find no salvation.[63] The belief is affirmed by the Gita that one merges with the object of one's worship.[64] Thus those who worship *prakṛti,* remain entrapped in the cycle of rebirth.

***The Culmination of Prakṛti***

The primal upshot of latent or un-manifested *prakṛti* is *vidyut* (energy) followed by materiality. *Prakṛti,* is the fundamental cause of all that is un-manifested and eventually devours the manifested world back into itself.[65] In the exegesis of this mantra Dayanand clarifies that in the process of its manifestation, the commotion of *prakṛti* initially gets manifested as energy, which is the beginning of creation. This energy, though an explosion or vibration, leads to the process of creating gross elemental forms, and as a result, the invisible, latent form of *prakṛti* expands into a magnanimous expansive universe. Thus *prakṛti* is the elemental factor of all the causative factors, which eventually absorbs the entire creation into the basic causal form.

***Prakṛti - the Elemental Causative Factor***

*Prakṛti* is causative, leading to various dimensional transformations, but are these created by *prakṛti* itself or by another power? The Yajurveda answers the question stating that *Paramātmā,* Supreme God is *Svayambhū,* existing (pervading) in all the forms. He supports the world formed by the waters as well as the material cause of the creation.[66]

Kaṭhopaniṣad, distinguishing *prakṛti* and *Īśvara,* affirms that *puruṣa* beyond the un-manifested *prakṛti* is pervasive and genderless or neutral. Those who are aware of this, achieve liberation.[67] Meaning thereby, that those confined to or indulged in *prakṛti* do not get liberated from its fetters, and only those having extensive and comprehensive awareness of *puruṣa* find liberation. *Jīvātmā,* the spiritual being, remains distressed owing to its indulgence with *prakṛti,* but the distress vanishes at the gift of divine grace of yogic vision.[68]

*Prakṛti,* mentioned in the Upaniṣads is both destructible and indestructible. Its manifested form is destructible, while the latent or un-manifested causal form is indestructible. Both the forms are unified, held by *Paramātmā.* While *jivātmā* is confined or aligned to the cycle of life and death owing to its indulgence or relish, it acquires liberation on its awareness of the Supreme God.[69] *Prakṛti* is distinct from both *jīva* and *paramātmā,* both of which are immortal, whereas, *prakṛti* is both mortal as well as immortal.

It can be concluded that the Vedic philosophy clearly perceives the dominion of *Īśvara, jīva* and *prakṛti,* to be distinct from each other.

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This goes on to reaffirm the notion that *Brahma* is Truth, Wisdom embodied and eternal. It is not only difficult but impossible to confine His creation in any specific doctrine. It is impossible to perceive manifested truth, and since speech too is a form of manifestation; it is therefore also impossible to denote truth in speech. Whatever is expressed in the form of speech is an approximation of the truth and not the complete truth. It cannot be said that the Vedas affirm any indoctrinated truth. The divine creation of God, the Vedas, can be perceived as per one's ability.

Maharshi Dayanand has discerned one such course embodied in the Vedic mantras which remained unnamed, or was merely expressed as *Dvaita. Dvaita* basically refers to the twin dominion of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti.* Dayanand established the basic vitality of Indian culture, substantiating his Vedic philosophy of the three eternals, God, Soul and Matter, as *Traitavāda*, the philosophy of Trinity.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. *Ṛgveda*, 10.129.6;
   अर्वाग्देवा अस्य विसर्जनेनाथा को वेद यत आबभूव॥
2. *Rgveda*, 10.129.6–7
3. *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad*, 1.1
4. Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash, Swamantavyāmantavyaprakāsh* and *Āryodeshyaratnamālā*
5. *Ṛgveda*, 1.164.20 and *Satyarth Prakash* (ed. Yudhishthira Mimamsaka, 1972), Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Bahalgarh, chapter 8, p. 306.
   द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परि षस्वजाते। तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्त्यनश्नन्नन्यो अभि चाकशीति॥
6. *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad*, 4.5;
   अजामेकां लोहितशुक्लकृष्णां बह्वीः प्रजाः सृजमानां स्वरूपाः। अजो ह्येको जुषमाणोऽनुशेते जहात्येनां भुक्तभोगामजोऽन्यः॥
7. *Ibid.*, 1.2
8. *Ibid.*, 1.3
9. *Ṛgveda*, 1.164.39 and *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter 7, p. 255
10. *Yajurveda*, 40.1 and *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter 7, p. 255
11. *Ṛgveda*, 10.48.1 and *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter 7, p. 255
12. *Ibid.*, 10.48.5 and *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter 7, p. 255
13. *Ibid.*, 10.49.1 and *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter 7, p. 255
14. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, 14.6.8.8 and *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Mukti Visaya*, (ed. Yudhithira Mimamsaka, 1984), Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Amritsar, p. 220.
15. *Bṛhdāranyakopaniṣad*, 3.7.2-14
16. *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad*, 3.19 and *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter 7, p. 272
17. *Ibid.*, 6.8 and *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter 7, p. 272
18. *Kaṭhopaniṣad*, 1.2.15
19. *Ibid.*, 1.2.16–17
20. *Ibid.*, 1.3.15
21. *Ibid.*, 2.2.12
22. *Yogasutra*, 1.13–15
23. *Ṛgveda*, 1.164.4
24. *Ibid.*, 1.164.5–6
25. *Ibid.*, 1.164.1
26. *Ibid.*, 1.164.20
27. *Atharvaveda*, 10.8.25

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28. *Ibid.*, 10.8.26
29. *Ibid.*, 10.8.27-28
30. *Ibid.*, 1.24.1-2
31. *Yajurveda*, 3.54, 12.36-38 and its Dayanand Bhāshya
32. *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, 5.10.6
33. *Yajurveda*, 39.6 and its Dayanand Bhāshya
34. *Sāmkhyakārikā* 41;
चित्रं यथाश्रयमृते स्थाण्वादिभ्यो विना यथा छाया। तद्वद्विनाविशेषैस्तिष्ठति न निराश्रयं लिङ्गम्॥
35. *Bṛhdāranyakopaniṣad*, 4.4.3
36. *Gita*, 8.24-25
37. *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, 5.10.3-6
38. *Ṛgveda*, 10.37.8, 2.28.9, 7.32.26, 10.18.3, 10.36.9, 10.18.4 and *Yajurveda*, 19.46
39. *Yajurveda*, 40.8;
स पर्यगाच्छुक्रमकायमव्रणमस्नाविरं शुद्धमपापविद्धम्। कविर्मनीषी परिभूः स्वयम्भूर्याथातथ्यतोऽर्थान् व्यदधाच्छाश्वतीभ्यः समाभ्यः॥
40. *Ṛgveda*, 10.129.1
41. *Yogadarśana*, 2.19;
निस्सत्तासतं निःसदसत् निरसदव्यक्तमलिङ्गं प्रधानम्।
42. *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, 3.19.1; असदेवेदमग्र आसीत्।
43. Shankara, *Chāndogyopaniṣadbhāshya*, 3.19.1;
असदव्याकृतनामरूपमिदं जगदशेषमग्रे प्रागवस्थायामुपपत्तेरासीन्न त्वसदेव।
44. *Ibid.*, अव्याकृतनामरूपत्वादसदिवासीदिति।
45. *Ibid.*, आदित्यनिमित्तो हि लोके सदिति व्यवहारः।
46. *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, 6.2.1
47. *Ṛgveda*, 10.72.2;
ब्रह्मणस्पतिरेता सं कर्मार इवाधमत्।
48. *Ibid.*, 10.72.6
49. *Ibid.*, 10.129.4;
सतो बन्धुमसति निरविन्दन्
50. Keśavamiśra, *Tarkabhāṣā, Pramāṇavivecana.*
51. *Ṛgveda*, 10.129.2
52. *Ibid.*, 10.129.3; तम आसीत्तमसा गूळ्हमग्रेऽप्रकेतं सलिलं सर्वमा इदम्।
53. *Manusmriti*, 1.5; आसीदिदं तमोभूतमप्रज्ञातमलक्षणम्। अप्रतर्क्यमविज्ञेयं प्रसुप्तमिव सर्वतः॥
54. Dayanand, *Ṛgvedabhāshya*, 1.32.4; अन्धकाराद्या इव, 1.117.3 कपटादियुक्ताः क्रियाः, 2.11.10 छलयुक्ताः, 2.27.16 प्रज्ञाः, 3.53.8 प्रज्ञाः, 5.2.9 छलादियुक्ता प्रज्ञाः।
55. *Ṛgveda*, 1.89.10
56. (a) *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, 7.4.2.7; इयं (पृथिवी) वाऽअदितिः। इयं हीदं सर्वं ददते। (b) *Śatapatha Brahmāna*, 10.6.5.5 सर्वं वाऽअत्तीति तददितेरदितित्वम्। (c) *Kāṭhak*, 8.2; यत्तदादत्त तददितिः।
57. (a) *Nirukta*, 4.22; अदितिरदीना देवमाता। (b) देवराजयज्वन्, *Nighaṇṭu*, 1.1.14; अदितिः (पृथिवी)। √दीङ् क्षये। अदितिः सकलप्रपञ्चधारणेष्वदीना न खिद्यते इत्यर्थः। (c) *Nighaṇṭu*, 2.11.6; न द्यति अखण्डनीया वा।
58. *Yajurveda*, 23.56 and its Dayanand Bhāshya
59. *Sāmkhyakārikā* 9;
असदकरणादुपादानग्रहणात्सर्वसम्भवाभावात्। शक्तस्य शक्यकरणात्कारणभावाच्च सत्कार्यम्॥
60. *Yajurveda*, 33.38 and its Dayanand Bhāshya
61. *Ibid.*, 40.9 and its Dayanand Bhāshya
62. *Sāmkhyakārikā* 45;
वैराग्यात्प्रकृतिलयः संसारो राजसाद्भवति रागात्। ऐश्वर्यादविघातो विपर्ययात्तद्विपर्यासः॥
63. Vyāsabhāshya, *Yogadarśana*, 1.19;

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प्रकृतिलयाः साधिकारे चेतसि प्रकृतिलीने कैवल्यपदमिवानुभवन्ति, यावन्न पुनरावर्ततेऽधिकारवशाच्चित्तमिति।

64. *Gita*, 7.23;
अन्तवत्तु फलं तेषां तद्भवत्यल्पमेधसाम्। देवान्देवयजो यान्ति मद्भक्ता यान्ति मामपि॥
65. *Yajurveda*, 23.54 and its Dayanand Bhāshya
66. *Ibid.*, 23.63 and its Dayanand Bhāshya
67. *Kaṭhopaniṣad*, 1.2.8
68. *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*, 3.1.2
69. *Śvetaśvataropaniṣad*, 1.8

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CHAPTER 40

# The Philosophy of Rebirth and Karma-consequence

*Ranvir Singh*

Swami Dayanand Saraswati, the founder of Arya Samaj, ranks foremost among the architects of modern India. He was not only a social reformer of the highest order but also a visionary philosopher committed to human welfare in all spheres of life. He worked tirelessly for the political, religious and cultural emancipation and advancement of the country. Some of the reforms institutionalised by the Indian Constitution have been inspired by his teachings.

Dayanand, empowered with the instrument of irresistible logic, was not only the first harbinger of renaissance in the Indian society and the practice of *dharma,* he also established a great harmony between tradition and modernity. He took Hinduism back to the Vedic foundations, and successfully evolved a robust thought, based on the real teachings of the Vedas, Smritis and other Indian philosophical treatises, which can now be called *Dayanand-darśana.* At the time when the materialistic thinking of Chārvāka and Advaita Philosophy of Shankara had great influence, the philosophy of Dayanand transformed the life and thinking of the Indian society and achieved remarkable success in many spheres.

## SOME SCHOOLS OF INDIAN THOUGHT

The oriental literature is replete with descriptions of ways and means suggested to by-pass the consequences of one's bad deeds. Some populist and casual references in the texts like Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābhārata, Purāṇas, Smritis, various Tīrtha-Mahātmyas and some Vedic Commentators influenced by paurāṇic myths, describe that one can be pardoned from receiving the fruits of bad deeds by worship, chanting, fasting, donation, pilgrimage etc. This paper intends to examine such notions by applying the

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logical and practical method of Dayanand which is perfectly convincing and unambiguous. In this endeavour, the important references to rebirth and *karmaphal* (karma-consequence) from Vedic, Smriti, Epic and philosophical literature, will be discussed thread bare.

***Traitvāda***

Dayanand established that there are three main elemental constituents of the universe, i.e., *prakṛti* (material cause of the universe), *jivātmā* (soul) and *Īśvara* (God) – *bhogya, bhokttā* and *niyantā*. This view is soundly based on the specific references to the eternals in the Vedic Samhitās and Upaniṣads etc.[1] *Prakṛti* is inanimate (*jaḍa*) and inactive. *Jīvātmās* (embodied individual souls) are sensitive, conscious and numerous. These exist in all beings but are limited in their awareness and potential. Every *jivātmā* enjoys freedom in performing its deeds (*karmas*) but is always under the supervision of *Īśvara* and is subject to Him for the fruits of the deeds done. *Īśvara* is one, and He alone is worthy of being worshipped. He is formless, all-pervading, omnipresent, kind, imparts justice, creates the Universe in the right manner, and dispenses the *sukha* and *duḥkha* to all beings in consequence of their good and bad deeds.[2] In this system there is no scope whatsoever for partiality, pardon and escape.[3] Truthfulness, morality and practicability are the main features of Dayanand's philosophy.[4]

***Chārvāka***

The opinion of Chārvāka (Lokāyata), a quasi-philosophical Indian school of materialists, which rejects the existence and eternity of soul, notion of an afterworld, karma-consequence (*karmaphal*), liberation (*mokṣa*), the authority of the Vedas and other sacred scriptures, has been refuted by all other schools of Indian philosophy. Dayanand also vehemently rejects the Chārvāka views.[5]

***Buddhism***

Normally scholars consider Buddhism as a philosophy of *anātmavādins* believing in the non-soul theory but Dayanand considers it as *ātmavādī*.[6] Buddha argued that there exists no eternal, unchanging "self", and there exists no *dharmī*, but there are only the *dharmas* such as *vijñāna* etc., which also are momentary. Only their series (*santati*) remains existent through which *karmaphal* can be exhausted. It seems that these arguments are related with the form and nature of *ātmā* and not pertinently to its existence.[7] Stcherbatsky, a scholar of Buddhism, says that the acceptance of another personality with the flow of mental and physical elements is recognised as *ātmavāda*, whereas the acceptance of some permanent (eternal) soul is called *Pudgalavāda*. Two sects of Buddhists, i.e., Vatsiputrīya and Sammitīya accept *Pudgalavāda*.[8] Buddha himself has recognised the partial existence of *pudgala* in reference to *Bhāravāhī sūtra* - "O Bhikshus! I am to explain to you regarding *bhāra* and *bhārahāra*. *Pañcaskandhas* are *bhāra* and *pudgala* is *bhārahāra*. He who says that there is no *ātmā* is having a false vision."[9] Stcherbatsky says - "This stream of elements kept together and not limited to

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present life but having its roots in past existence and its continuation in future ones, is the Buddhist counterpart of the soul or self of other systems."[10]

Vachaspati Mishra has discussed the viability of the doctrine of karma while Buddhism does not accept the existence of soul. The main objection is that it will bring the fear of 'destruction of unconsumed deeds' (कृतविनाशः) and 'availability of non-performed deeds' (अकृताभ्यागमः). Refuting these objections of *Nyāya-vaiśeṣikans* the Buddhists accept the doctrine of karma even in the absence of *ātmā.*[11] Vachaspati Mishra, on behalf of the Buddhists, explains that the *citta-santāna* of previous body is liable to consume the fruit even when shifted to another body.[12] The fruit of a deed done by a *cittakṣaṇa* related to the stream of the *cittasantati* of a body is consumed by another *cittakṣaṇa* of the same *cittasantati,* therefore, the same *cittasantati* has consumed the fruit which had performed the deed, and the objections cited above do not have any merit.[13] Thus Buddhism is *ātmavādin* though partially, and believes in the theory of *karmaphal.* All other schools of Indian Philosophy are *ātmavādins.*

Though both of these topics, rebirth and *karmaphal* are interrelated, yet for the sake of convenience, they are being discussed under separate subheadings.

## REBIRTH

The belief in rebirth is one of the main features of the Indian culture, thought and general behaviour of the society through the ages. It has also developed through the whole gamut of Indian literature and come down to the treatises of philosophy, grammar and classical Sanskrit literature till date. Dayanand believes in rebirth and the eternity of soul. Every human being feels the sense of 'I am', so *ātmā* refers to a person's 'true self', the permanent inner nature, i.e., 'soul'.

*Ātmā* is *anādi* and *nitya,* i.e., it has no beginning as it is eternal in existence. It is imperishable (अविनाशी) but limited in its awareness (अल्पज्ञ). It is distinct from the body because of the physical and psychological complexity of human existence. The existence of the soul is made manifest only when it is embodied. When it leaves the body, the latter suffers dissolution and ceases to be the habitation of consciousness.[14] Dayanand argues that had the soul been born, it would have inherited two demerits – it would be perishable and non-eternal. If *ātmā* had been non-eternal then the operation of the *karmaphal* system would have become impossible. *Jīvātmā* exists not only here and now, but also hereafter. After one's death when it becomes untraceable and unknown, it does not perish.[15] In the same way, during the period of dissolution (प्रलय), *jīvātmās* remain existent but inactive as in deep sleep with brahma and prakṛti.[16] Thus, *ātmā* is imperishable and the human body acts only when *ātmā* is united with it, and is otherwise dead and senseless.

*Īśvara, jīva* and the material cause of *jagat* – these three have no beginning or end. Dayanand, quoting intensively from the scriptures, has discussed the inter-relationship of these three. Though *prakṛti, jīva,* and *Īśvara* are *aja,* i.e., having no birth or beginning, it is also to be noted that *jīva* from *Īśvara,* and *prakṛti* from both, is fundamentally different. *Anādi jīva* gets itself involved in the experience of *anādi prakṛti*

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but *Īśvara* only watches. *Prakṛti* is senseless and comprises a close combination of three senseless qualities, i.e., *sattva, rajas* and *tamas. Prakṛti,* the primordial elementary matter, is the material cause (उपादान कारण) of the universe (जगत्), which is transformed into the universe by *Īśvara.* Contrary to it, the *puruṣa* (*jīva* and *Īśvara*) is neither the material cause, nor the material effect of anything.[17] *Īśvara* is the primary originator efficient cause (प्रधान निमित्त कारण) and *jīva* is the secondary efficient cause (साधारण निमित्त कारण) of the universe.[18] *Īśvara* creates the universe out of the *prakṛti,* sustains it and then resolves it into its elementary form. Therefore *Īśvara* and *jīva* both are quite different from *prakṛti.*

A question merits an answer here – what is the difference between *Īśvara* and *jīva? Īśvara* is infinite by nature. His essence, powers and attributes are all infinite. He can, therefore, never be subject to ignorance, pain and bondage, etc. The soul, even when emancipated, remains finite in knowledge, though pure in nature. Its attributes, powers and activity – all remain finite. It can, therefore, never be like God.[19] Being the doer of good and bad deeds, *jīva* suffers both *sukha* and *duḥkha.*[20] *Īśvara* is the witness of the deeds of *jīva* and causes to dispense the consequences accordingly.

Swami Dayanand, while discussing rebirth (अथ पुनर्जन्मविषयः संक्षेपतः) in his Ṛgvedādibhāṣya-bhūmikā, has quoted and commented upon nine references from the Ṛgveda, Atharvaveda, Yajurveda, Nirukta, Yogasūtra of Patanjali and Nyāyasūtra of Gautama, and has established quite logically, the existence of rebirth.[21]

While explaining Atharvaveda 5.1.2, Dayanand exegetes[22]:

> A man who has performed righteous deeds in his previous birth, assumes good bodies (*vapūṉsi*) in his successive birth on the strength of those virtuous deeds. But if a man has done evil, he would never get a human body. He suffers afflictions and is (condemned to be) born into the body of an animal, etc. God suggests this in the (first) half of this mantra. The word *dhāsyuḥ* means the one who bears. Thus, the individual soul, whose nature is to bear the consequences of righteous or evil actions, done by him in his previous birth is *dhāsyuḥ*, i.e., the bearer. Such a soul, having left the old body, enters (*ā-viveśa*) such substances as the air, water, herbs, etc., and then through them it enters into a new body in accordance with the fruits of its former good or evil deeds. A man, who attains the complete knowledge of the Vedic lore – a speech which has been revealed by God and thus is unspoken (by man, i.e., *an-uditam*), is awarded the body of a learned man like his former body and enjoys happiness. But a man, who acts contrary to (the Vedic teaching), obtains the body of the lower beings and suffers pain."[23]

Yāska shares this view and clearly supports the doctrine of transmigration of soul. He quotes three ancient verses bearing accentuation, which very distinctly narrate rebirth - "I died and was born again; and having been born I died once again. I dwelt in thousands of various bodies."[24] "I have relished many kinds of food and have been fed by many types of breasts. I have witnessed various mothers, fathers and friends."[25] And

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"A *jiva* is born with its head downwards, and (greatly) suffering afflictions."[26] Presenting an important clue from the Yajurveda 19.4, Dayanand says[27]:

> There are two (separate) paths in this world for experiencing the consequences of righteous and evil deeds. One is the path of *Pitaras* and the other is that of the *Devas*, i.e., the learned and the wise. The former includes those, who are devoid of knowledge and wisdom. One is called *Pitryāna* and the other *Devayāna*. That where a soul assumes human form through (the agency of) the father and mother and experiences pleasure and pain (as the case may be) as the fruits of his good and evil deeds again and again, i.e., where the soul is subject to past and future births is called the *Pitryāna*. The other path, following which the soul obtains the stage (*pada*) of *mokṣa* (emancipation) and is liberated from the world, i.e., the cycle of birth and death, is called the *Devayāna*. In the former (the *jīva*) having enjoyed the fruits of his accumulated righteous deeds is born again and dies again. In the latter he is not born again, nor does he die again. I have heard of these two paths. Through these two paths the moving (*ejati*, i.e., transmigrates) all (*viśva*) pass and repass. When the *jīva*, leaving his previous body and wandering about in the air, water or vegetable kingdom, enters the body of the father and mother, he becomes an embodied soul.[28]

This interpretation of Dayanand has been clearly corroborated in Bhagavadgita where two paths – *śukla* and *kṛṣṇa* – have been narrated. It has been clearly mentioned that after death, the Yogi who goes by *śukla-patha*, does not return to the cycle of birth and death, and the one who goes by *kṛṣṇa-patha*, does.[29]

The sage Gautama, the composer of Nyāyasūtra, and Vatsyayana, its commentator, also share the doctrine of rebirth – "*Punarutpattih Pretya-bhāva* (पुनरुत्पत्तिः प्रेत्यभावः)[30] i.e., existence after death, is rebirth." *Pretya-bhāva* is a technical term which means to leave an old body and to assume a new one. According to the theory of transmigration, such an immortal soul takes birth after each death in an unending series of lives, one after the other. This cycle of birth and death is called *āvāgamana*, i.e., the coming and going.

The great seer Patañjali in his Yogasūtra and his commentator Veda Vyāsa have also established the fact of transmigration of soul - स्वरसवाही विदुषोऽपि तथारूढोऽभिनिवेशः।।[31]- सर्वस्य प्राणिन इयमात्माशीर्नित्या भवति मा न भूवं भूयासमिति, न चाननुभूतमरणधर्मकस्यैषा भवत्यात्माशीः, एतया च पूर्वजन्मानुभवः प्रतीयते; स चायमभिनिवेशः क्लेशः स्वरसवाही कृमेरपि जातमात्रस्य प्रत्यक्षानुमानागमैरसम्भावितो मरणत्रास उच्छेददृष्ट्यात्मकः पूर्वजन्मानुभूतं मरणदुःखमनुमापयति। यथा चायमत्यन्तमूढेषु दृश्यते क्लेशस्तथा विदुषोऽपि, विज्ञातपूर्वापरान्तस्य रूढः। कस्मात्? समाना हि तयोः कुशलाकुशलयोर्मरणदुःखानुभवादियं वासनेति।[32] - Flowing through its own nature, and established even in the learned, is *abhiniveśa*, i.e., the clinging to life. Dayanand explains:

> the fear of death, prevailing upon all living beings since the very birth, clearly establishes the fact that there are births and rebirths. Even a new-born insect fears death. A learned man also has a similar feeling. This shows that the soul assumes many forms. Without the experience of death in a previous birth, there

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can be no impression of the same in the next birth. Without impression, there can be no memory. In the absence of memory, how can there be the fear of death? As we witness the fear of death being exhibited by all living beings, we conclude that past and future births do take place.[33]

Thus, in the theory of transmigration, the fear of death and desire to live go hand in hand. The two impulses are ever-present among all creatures, from a tiny worm to the human being. A person infers the fear of death as a result of his or her previous life.

The Gītā also says - *Jātasya hi dhruvo mṛtyudhruvam janma mṛtasya ca.*[34] It is a hard fact that one who has taken birth is sure to die and who has died is sure to take birth. It also testifies that the gross human body goes through gradual changes such as childhood, youth and old age, and the *jīvātmā*,[35] does not get extinct with the death of the corporal gross body. Muṇḍakopaniṣad says that the one who intends to enjoy sensual desires, accordingly gets births and births to fulfil these desires.[36]

Here, the question arises – why do we not remember if there is any previous birth? Dayanand has replied to this query in very simple terms – There is no memory of the pleasures and pains experienced even in this life for the initial five years after birth, now; nor do we remember all those events which transpired in our waking and sleeping states. Not to speak then of the remembrance of the events of past life.[37] Nirukta clarifies this point pertinently that as soon as the new-born baby comes into contact with atmospheric air, he forgets all his memories regarding previous births and deaths. Good and bad deeds are the deciding factors for receiving the next body.[38]

The doctrine of rebirth is based on solid ground and sound facts. As elaborated above, Dayanand has relied everywhere on valid logic.

## KARMAPHAL

*Karmaphal* (Karma Consequence) is one of the most important topics of Indian Philosophy. The doctrine of *karmaphal* can safely be called the spiritual form of the firm theory of cause and effect of the physical world.[39] As every effect in the physical world is preceded by a relative cause, so every *sukha* and *duḥkha* is caused by some good or evil deed. The basic principle of Natural Justice in jurisprudence asserts that the doer must receive the fruit, good or bad, strictly according to the quality of the deed done.[40] In daily routine also, it would amount to injustice if a labourer is denied his wage and a criminal saved of the punishment he deserves. One must bear the consequence of one's deeds. One has to reap exactly what one sows.

Dayanand and the Arya Samaj accordingly believe that *Īśvara* delivers justice to every *jīva* without any prejudice. Dayanand, while explaining *Rudra* in the hundred names of *Īśvara* in the first chapter of his Satyarth Prakash, says that it is derived from √*rudir* - to shed tears; *Rudra* is the One who makes the wicked and the unjust shed tears.[41] For support, he quotes from Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa[42] – *Yanmanasā dhyāyati tadvācā vadati, yadvācā vadati tat karmaṇā karoti, yat karmaṇā karoti tadabhisamyadyate.* It means "Whatever a man thinks, he speaks; whatever he speaks, he acts; whatever he acts, he

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reaps." In other words, a man reaps whatever he sows. When the wicked suffers pain as a consequence of his sins, at the hand of Divine Justice, he wails and weeps. The God, therefore, is called *Rudra.* Dayanand argues that the supreme attribute of *Īśvara* is Omnipotence and He does not require the least assistance from any person in all his works such as creation, sustenance and dissolution of the Universe, and administration of due justice of *pāpa* and *puṇya* of *jīvas* according to the circumstances.[43]

Unlike *Vedantins* and later *Sankhaits,* who consider the *jīva* as *asaṅga* (unattached) and *sākṣi* (witness) only, Dayanand establishes that *jīva* is the doer of deeds and the sufferer of *karmaphal.*[44] That *jīva* is free to do and can do good or bad deeds independently. Quoting Pāṇini[45] he remarks: "Who is free and independent, that is the doer."[46] To those who argue that *jīva* performs acts by the inspiration of *Īśvara,* Dayanand responds – If *Īśvara* would inspire man for doing deeds then no *jīva* could dare do unrighteous deeds (*pāpa),* because, *Īśvara* being pious and righteous, would not have inspired to do the wrongful deeds. That is why *jīva* is independent to perform.[47] Dayanand also argues - if the *jīva* is accepted as dependent under God, it could not be held responsible for its *pāpa* and *puṇya.*[48] Dayanand therefore, forcefully establishes the freedom of the doer. Thus, the philosophy of Dayanand and the Arya Samaj believes in human effort and exertion and also advocates the supremacy of action and hard work and condemns the sluggishness and laziness based on the concepts of luck or destiny.

The freedom of *jīva* is not unlimited. He is dependent in the system of *Īśvara* and after doing wrong, he comes under the scrutiny of *Īśvara* to suffer the consequences of the wrong-doings.[49] Similarly *jīva* has to enjoy the fruit of righteous deeds under the same system. The types of consequences of the *karmas,* and the varieties of *sukh-duḥkh* etc., have been elaborately discussed in Satyarth Prakash on the authority of Manusmriti.[50] While Dayanand narrates four different types of the body at different stages,[51] he mentions five *koṣas* – *Annamaya, Prāṇamaya, Manomaya, Vijñānamaya, Ānandamaya* and points out that these are the media for the *jīva* to perform activities like *karma, upāsanā* and *jñāna* and also for the sufferance of *karmaphal.*[52]

For the maintenance of the order of Justice *Īśvara,* does not forgive the evil deeds. It doesn't make any difference as to who is the doer, even if he is a great devotee of God. Relaxation can lead people to defy the authority, rather to anarchy and they may even indulge in greater sins.[53] If somebody worships God for forgiveness or clemency of his sins, he, according to Dayanand, is the greatest idiot. A remarkable reference in the Pātaṅjala-rahasyam clarifies this appropriately- *Nābhuktaṁ kṣīyate karma kalpakoṭiśatairapi*[54]. The deed done right or wrong is to be faced and suffered without any escape. The unfructified deed is never destroyed. Expiation in this regard is a different matter, which can lead to the purification of mind, speech and deeds.

The whole tradition of Vedic Literature is replete with references of stringent consequences of bad deeds.[55] The seers and sages pray to God for keeping them away from *aṅhas, agha, enas, kaluṣa, kalmas, kilbis, durita, duṣkṛta, paṅka, pāpman,* and *vrjina* etc., all synonyms of *pāpas.*[56] But nowhere in the Vedas does one find any reference for

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pardon or amnesty of bad deeds. Such sycophantic attributes are to be found in later literature, and are invalid, being contrary to the Vedic teachings.

The Vedic seers are pertinently vigilant of enacting unrighteous behaviour and always pray to God to bestow strength so that they follow the righteous path and avoid the wrong, evil and bad. Ṛgveda says – *O Brahmaṇaspate!* Save the mortal from evil deed.[57] In the beginning of Ṛgvedādibhāṣyabhūmikā Dayanand prays to the Almighty *Viśvāni viśvāni deva savitarduritāni parā suva. yadbhadraṁ tanna ā suva.*[58]

> "O God, Thou art all-existence, all-intelligence, and all-bliss, most merciful, possessed of infinite knowledge, bestower of knowledge and science (*Deva*) illuminer of the whole universe - the sun etc., revealer of the knowledge, bestower of all joys, (*Savitā*) creator of the whole universe. Do dispel far away all our miseries and all evil properties; surround us and graciously provide us with that happiness which is absolutely free from all pains and which through the attainment of real knowledge leads to prosperity in this life and to final beatitude in the next stage.[59]

The following mantra of the Yajurveda, speaks of rebirth and prays for a good life, free of evil –

*Purarmanaḥ punrāyurma'āganpunaḥ prāṇaḥ punarātmā ma'āgan.*
*Vaiśvānaro'adabdhastanūpā'agnirnaḥ pātu duritādavadyāt.*[60]

Dayanand interprets it as: "O lord of the Universe; may the mind endowed with knowledge and other good merits and may the full term of life come again to us in our rebirth through Thy Grace. May the pure mind come to us in our rebirths. May the sight and hearing be restored to us. God, who is the Director and Leader of the universe (*Vaiśvānara*) has no defect such as deception (*adabdha*) and He is the preserver of our bodies (*tanūpā*). God is Agni, i.e., all wisdom and all bliss. May He keep us aloof from *durita*, i.e., evil deeds. May He give us shelter in all our rebirths so that we may be free from all sins and be happy in our rebirths."[61]

In another famous verse from the Yajurveda,[62] it is prayed that "Lead us, O Bestower of all happiness, Omniscient, Supreme Spirit, on the path of rectitude and inspire us with all kinds of knowledge and wisdom, rid us of all that is false and sinful in our conduct, and make us pure. To this end, we in all humility repeatedly praise and adore Thee." Direct us to that path following which we may not be liable to punishment by Thy Law.[63] It further says - "Lead us, O Supreme Spirit, Teacher of teachers, from falsehood unto rectitude, from darkness into light of knowledge, from death and disease to immortality and eternal happiness."[64]

The description of the consequences of deeds and consumption of their fruits is also found in the later Vedic and Sanskrit literature. The following quotation from the Mādhyandina Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa clarifies that the righteous deed generates *puṇya* and evil deed, *pāpa*[65]- *Puṇyo vā puṇyena karmaṇā bhavati pāpaḥ pāpeneti.* Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa says that one who speaks improper, does vice (पाप) with the mouth; one who does violence towards another who doesn't deserve it, does vice with the arms; one who

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eats the food of another who hasn't eaten yet, does vice with the belly; one who goes to *janam*, i.e., village in the case of mendicants living in forest or unwanted people, does vice with the feet.[66] The Rāmāyaṇa says, *Śubhakṛcchubhamāpnoti pāpakṛtpāpamaśnute*[67] – The doer of righteous acts gets right and the doer of evil deeds gets evil.

Which body an *ātmā* is to receive in rebirth, is consequent upon the deeds done and *vidyā* acquired in the previous body - *Sa iha (pṛthivyāṁ) kīṭo vā patango vā matsyo vā śakunirvā sinho vā varāho vā paraśvā śārdūlo vā puruṣo vā anyo vā teṣu sthāneṣu pratyājāyate yathākarma yathāvidyam.*[68]

The Smṛti literature is also full of the narrations of *karmaphal.* Manusmṛti, in the first forty verses of the 12th chapter, discusses this topic quite extensively.[69] In the Mahābhārata, in the episode of *Dharmavyādha,*[70] it is said that one undoubtedly receives the result of good and bad deeds. While facing the worst circumstances, the fool doesn't look at the defects of his own deeds and blames God.[71] This episode carries a very minute analysis of good conduct involving the repercussions of the 'clinging effects of the deeds done in previous lives'.

Lastly, an important reference from the Vṛddhacāṇakya-Nītiśāstra may be quoted which describes the worst consequences of unrighteous behaviour[72] *Ātmāparādhavṛkṣasya phalānyetāni dehinām. Dāridraya-roga-duḥkhāni bandhana-vyasanāni ca* - poverty, diseases, sorrows, bondage and losses experienced by people are the fruits of the big tree of the wrong-doings enacted by them. Bhartrihari says that a person is saved in distress by the good deeds done by him in the former times.[73]

The Yogadarśana and its Vyāsabhāṣya very pertinently and minutely discuss the process of fruition of *karmas. Īcchā, dveṣa, prayatna, sukha-duḥkha, jñāna,*[74] and *prāṇa, apāna, nimeṣa-unmeṣa, jīvana, manana, gati,* and other inter-defects of senses such as *kṣudhā-tṛṣā, harṣa-śoka*[75] etc., are the signs and deeds of *jīvātmā.*[76] ((i) Inspiration or drawing the air in, with the breath, (ii) Expiration or drawing the air out with the breath, (iii) Downward nictation, (iv) Upward nictation, (v) life or sustenance of the breath, (vi) Mental faculty, e.g. cognition, (vii) Intended motion, (viii) Sensation or the vitalisation of the sense in the grasp of their objects, (ix) Internal modifications such as hunger, thirst, fever etc., (x) Pleasure, (xi) Pain, (xii) Desire, (xiii) Aversion, and (xiv) Energy – All these are the actions and attributes of the soul.[77] Wherever, these activities seem to be happening, a *jīvātmā* is there. Actually, these are the different forms of *karma* and *bhoga. Icchā* and *dveṣa* are mental deeds internally related to *sukha* and *duḥkha. Prayatna* is an external deed. Thus, all of them are the invariable marks of *jīvātmā.* Philosophically, a *karma* is the combined function of *citta, indriya* and *prāṇa,* but its actual doer is *jīvātmā.* The Yogadarśana recognises *citta* also as *manas* and *buddhi.*[78] Therefore, the combined functions of *buddhi, indriya* and *prāṇa* are liable to be suffered. So it is quite clear that the deeds done in an intelligent *yoni* of the human-form are liable to generate fruit while other *yonis* where intelligence with power of discrimination is absent, are mostly the *bhoga-yonis* only. Patañjali describes that these acquired balances of the good and bad deeds deliver fruits in the shape of *sukha* and *duḥkha* in the present and future lives.[79] The Vyāsabhāṣya specifies that the level of intensity of the good and bad deeds becomes instrumental for their early fruition.

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Those which are very intensive, fructify in the same birth.[80] He further records that the condemned, highly immoral and impious deeds do not bear result in the present birth; and are to be suffered in the coming lives.[81]

Thus, the inexorable doctrine of *karma* states that the deeds are productive and they yield good and bad results in terms of happiness or suffering. Consequently, *karmas* either accelerate movement or create obstacles on the path of emancipation (*mokṣa*) of the soul. The process of fruition continues in the chain of coming lives. Every deed done in the current life, leaves its print in the form of *sanskāras* (subliminal impressions) that follow the soul like a shadow in the next life. One cannot get rid of the *karma* without suffering the consequence - good or bad, whichever is the inherent appropriate result. In other words it seems that the principle of *karma* is at par with the principle of cause and effect and there exists an objective reality of the action and its result.

In the whole gamut of ancient Indian literature, the doctrines of rebirth and *karmaphal* are taken as the universal truth. Swami Dayanand Saraswati and the Arya Samaj believe in these principles. Being the basic tenets of Indian culture, philosophy and psyche, these continue to inspire the lives of millions in the Indian society, to try and regulate one's daily routine accordingly, and consequently, lead a good life.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. *Ṛgveda*, 1.164.20 - द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परि षस्वजाते। तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्त्यनश्नन्नन्यो अभि चाकशीति।। It means that two birds (*jīvātmā* and *Paramātmā*) ... are abiding the same tree (*prakṛti*), one (*jīvātmā*) is enjoying the fruits of that tree and the other (*Paramātmā*) without consuming only visualizes. Thus the existence of three - *Paramātmā, jīvātmā* and *prakṛti* - is distinctly made out here. Also read the same mantra in *Atharvaveda*, 9.9.20 and *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*, 3.1.1
2. Dayanand Saraswati, 2016 Vikrami, *Satyarth Prakash* (ed. Swami Vedanand), Virjanand Vaidik Sansthan, Ghaziabad, chapter 8, p. 183
3. *Ibid.*, chapter 7, p. 155
4. Shrinivas Shastri, 1977, *Dayanand-Darśana*, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, p. 5
5. Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter 12, pp. 369-371
6. *Ibid.*, p. 374 - "बौद्ध-जैन प्रत्यक्षादि चारों प्रमाण, अनादि जीव, पुनर्जन्म, परलोक और मुक्ति को भी मानते हैं।"
7. Shrinivas Shastri, *Dayanand-Darśana*, p. 60
8. Stcherbatsky, 1956, *Central Conception of Buddhism*, Calcutta, p. 58
9. Vachaspati Mishra, 1944, *Nyāyavārttikatātparyaṭīkā*, with *Nyāyabhāsya-vārttika* etc., Calcutta, p. 339 - भारं वो भिक्षवो देशयिष्यामि भारहारं च, भारः पञ्चस्कन्धा भारहारश्च पुद्गल इति। यश्चात्मा नास्तीति स मिथ्यादृष्टिको भवति।
10. Stcherbatsky, *Central Conception of Buddhism*, p. 22
11. Vachaspati Mishra, *op.cit.*, p. 350 – तदेवमकृत-कृताभ्यागम-विनाशप्रसङ्गः।
12. *Ibid.*, p. 506 - येन कायेनोपलक्षितः कश्चिच्चित्तसन्तानः स कायान्तरवर्त्यपि फलं भुङ्क्त इत्यर्थः।
13. Prajñākaramati, *Bodhicaryāvatārapañjikā* (ed. louis de La Poussin, 1901), Asiatic Society of Calcutta, Calcutta, p. 471, - सन्तानैक्यमाश्रित्य कर्त्ता भोक्तेति देशितम्।
14. See Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter 12, p. 370
15. *Ibid.*, chapter 12, p. 370
16. *Ibid.*, chapter 9, pp. 204-206; also see chapter 8, p. 181
17. *Ibid.*, chapter 8, p. 180
18. *Ibid.*, chapter 8, p. 181

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19. *Ibid.*, chapter 9, p. 209
20. *Ibid.*, chapter 9, p. 202
21. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāsyabhūmikā* (ed. Rajvir Shastri, 1976), Arsh Sahitya Prachar Trust, Delhi, 'अथ पुनर्जन्मविषयः संक्षेपतः', pp. 157-162.
22. आ यो धर्माणि प्रथमः ससाद ततो वपूंषि कृणुषे पुरूणि। धास्युर्योनिं प्रथम आ विवेशा यो वाचमनुदितां चिकेत।।
23. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāsyabhūmikā* (Eng. Trans. by Parmanand, 1981), Meharchand Lachhmandas, New Delhi, tr. of Skt. Bhāshya, p. 271
24. Yāska, *The Nighaṇṭu and The Nirukta*, (ed. Lakshman Sarup, 2002), Motilal Banarsidas, Delhi, p. 230, 13.19 - मृतश्चाहं पुनर्जातो जातश्चाहं पुनर्मृतः। नानायोनिसहस्राणि मयोषितानि यानि वै।।
25. *Ibid.*, 13.19 - आहारा विविधा भुक्ताः पीता नानाविधाः स्तनाः। मातरो विविधा दृष्टाः पितरः सुहृदस्तथा।।
26. *Ibid.*, 13.19 - अवाङ्मुखः पीड्यमानो जन्तुश्चैव समन्वितः।
27. *Yajurveda*, 19.47; द्वे सृती अशृणवं पितॄणामहं देवानामुत मर्त्यानाम्। ताभ्यामिदं विश्वमेजत्समेति यदन्तरा पितरं मातरं च।।
28. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāsyabhūmikā*, (Eng. Trans. by Parmanand, 1981), p. 273
29. *Bhagavadgītā*, 8.23 - यत्र काले त्वनावृत्तिमावृत्तिं चैव योगिनः। प्रयाता यान्ति तं कालं वक्ष्यामि भरतर्षभ।।
and 8.26 - शुक्लकृष्णे गती ह्येते जगतः शाश्वते मते। एकया यात्यनावृत्तिमन्ययावर्तते पुनः।।
30. Gautama, *Nyāyadarśanam*, with *Vātsyāyana-Bhāsya*, (ed. with Hindi trns. by Swami Dvarikadas Shastri, 1976), Bauddha Bharati, Varanasi, p. 33, 1.1.19
31. Patañjali, *Yogadarśanam*, 2.9; (ed. Goswami Damodara Shastri, 1935), Jayakrishnadas Haridas Gupta, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Series Office, Banaras, 2.9
32. *Ibid.*, Veda Vyāsa Bhāsya on *Yogadarśanam*, 2.9
33. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāsyabhūmikā*, English translation, p. 274
34. *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā*, 2.27; जातस्य हि ध्रुवो मृत्युर्ध्रुवं जन्म मृतस्य च।
35. *Ibid.*, 2.13 - देहिनोऽस्मिन्यथा देहे कौमारं यौवनं जरा। तथा देहान्तरप्राप्तिर्धीरस्तत्र न मुह्यति।।
36. *Īśādi Nau Upaniṣad*, with Śāṅkarabhāsya and its Hindi translation, *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*, Gita Press, Gorakhpur, (Saṁvat 2071), 3.2.2 – कामान्यः कामयते मन्यमानः स कामभिर्जायते तत्र तत्र।
37. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāsyabhūmikā*, (ed. Rajvir Shastri), pp. 160-161; also see *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter 9, pp. 213-215.
38. Yāska, *The Nighaṇṭu and The Nirukta*, p. 230, 13.19 - ... ततश्च दशमे... कर्मैतच्छरीरस्य प्रामाण्यम्।
39. Swami Rajarshi Muni, 2006, *Yoga: A Synthesis of Psychology and Metaphysics*, Motilal Banarsidas Publishers Pvt. Ltd., Delhi, chapter 10, Operation of Karmic Law, p. 97
40. Dayanand Saraswati, Satyarth Prakash, chapter 7, p. 155
41. *Ibid.*, chapter 1, p. 18
42. *Ibid.*, chapter 1, p. 18; यन्मनसा ध्यायति तद्वाचा वदति, यद्वाचा वदति तत् कर्मणा करोति, यत् कर्मणा करोति तदभिसम्पद्यते।
43. *Ibid.*, chapter 7, p. 155
44. *Ibid.*, chapter 9, p. 202 अच्छे बुरे कर्मों का कर्त्ता जीव सुख-दुःख का भोक्ता है, जीव कर्मों का साक्षी नहीं किन्तु कर्त्ता भोक्ता है।
45. Pāṇini, *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, 1.4.54 - स्वतन्त्रः कर्ता।
46. Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter 7, p. 164
47. *Ibid.*, p. 165
48. *Ibid.*, pp. 164-165
49. *Ibid.*, p. 165
50. *Ibid.*, chapter 9, pp. 218-221
51. *Ibid.*, pp. 209-210
52. *Ibid.*, p. 210
53. *Ibid.*, chapter 7, p. 164
54. Patañjali, *Yogadarśanam*, Pātanjalarahasyam by Raghavanand Saraswati, quoted at 2.13, p. 164; नाभुक्तं क्षीयते कर्म कल्पकोटिशतैरपि।
55. See Ranvir Singh, 2011, *प्राचीन भारतीय चिन्तन में कर्मफल-विवेचन*, K. U. Res. J., vol.XLV, pp. 1-16

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56. See Rajvir Shastri, 1975, *Dayanand Vaidika Koshaḥ,* Arsh Sahitya Prachar Trust, Delhi.
57. *Ṛgveda*, 1.18.5 - त्वं तं ब्रह्मणस्पते सोम इन्द्रश्च मर्त्यम्। दक्षिणा पात्वंहसः।।
58. *Ibid.*, 5.82.5 and also occurs in Yajurveda, 30.3; विश्वानि देव सवितर्दुरितानि परा सुव। यद्भद्रं तन्नऽआसुव।।
59. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāsyabhūmikā* (Tr. Parmanand), p. 4.
60. *Yajurveda*, 4.15; पुनर्मनः पुनरायुर्मऽआगन्पुनः प्राणः पुनरात्मा मऽआगन् पुनश्चक्षुः पुनः श्रोत्रं मऽआगन्। वैश्वानरोऽअदब्धस्तनूपाऽअग्निर्नः पातु दुरितादवद्यात्।।
61. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāsyabhūmikā* (Tr. Parmanand), pp. 270-271
62. *Ṛgveda,* 1.189.1 & *Yajurveda*, 40.16 - अग्ने नय सुपथा राये अस्मान्विश्वानि... भूयिष्ठां ते नमउक्तिं विधेम।।
63. *Yajurveda*, 16.15 - ...मा नः प्रियास्तन्वो रुद्र रीरिषः।।
64. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, 14.4.1.30-31, - असतो मा सद्गमय, तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय, मृत्योर्माऽमृतं गमयेति।।
65. *Mādhyandina Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, Complete Text only (ed. by Chinna Swami Shastri, 1984), Pattabhiram Shastri, and Ramnath Dikshit, Varansi, 14.6.2.14, p. 1252; पुण्यो वा पुण्येन कर्मणा भवति पापः पापेनेति।
66. *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* (ed. Raghuvir and Lokeshchandra, 1954), Saraswati Vihar, Nagpur, 2.135
67. *Vālmīkirāmāyaṇa*, with Tilaka and Ramayanashiromani Commentaries, vol. vi, Yuddhakāṇḍa (ed. Shastri Shrinivasa Katti Mudholakar, 1983), Meharchand Lachhamandas, Delhi, 111.26, p. 2631; शुभकृच्छुभमाप्नोति पापकृत्पापमश्नुते।
68. *Shāṅkhāyanārṇayakam* (ed. Shridhar Shastri, 1922), Anandashram, Pune, 3.2; also found in *Kauṣītaki-Brāhmṇopaniṣad*, Ed. Vasudev Sharma, Nirnayasagar Press, Mumbai, 1917, 1.2; स इह पृथिव्यां कीटो वा पतंगो वा मत्स्या वा शकुनिर्वा सिंहो वा वराहो... अन्यो वा तेषु स्थानेषु प्रत्याजायते यथाकर्म यथाविद्यम्।
69. *Manusmriti* (Eng. trns. by M.N. Dutt, ed. R.N. Sharma, 2003), Chowkhambha Sanskrit Pratishthan, Delhi.
70. *Mahābhārata-Saṇhitā*, Cr. Text, R.N. Dandekar, 1971, Ist Vol., Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Pune, the episode of *Dharmavyādha, Āraṇyakaparva*, chapters - 197-206
71. *Ibid.*, *Āraṇyakaparva*, 200.5-6
72. *Vṛddhacāṇakya-Nītiṣāstra*, being a part of *Cāṇakya-Nīti-Śākhā-Saṁpradāya* (ed. Ludwick Sternbauch, 1963-64), VVRI, Hoshiarpur, vol 1, part 1, 14.2; आत्मापराधवृक्षस्य फलान्येतानि देहिनाम्। दारिद्र्य-रोग-दुःखानि बन्धन-व्यसनानि च।।
73. Bhartrihari, *Nitīśatakam* (tr. Rishikumar Sharma), Dehati Pustak Bhandar, Delhi, verse 96 - वने रणे शत्रुजलाग्निमध्ये महार्णवे पर्वतमस्तके वा। सुप्तं प्रमत्तं विषमस्थितं वा रक्षन्ति पुण्यानि पुराकृतानि।।
74. Gautama, *Nyāyadarśanam*, with Vatsyayana-Bhāshya, 1.1.10 - इच्छाद्वेषप्रयत्नसुखदुःखज्ञानान्यात्मनो लिङ्गम्।
75. Kanada, *Vaiśeṣikadarśana*, with Praśastapādabhāṣya, Prakashika Hindi commentary by Dhundhiraj Shastri, Edited with Hindi trn. of Vaiśeṣika Sūtras by Narayana Mishra, 1981, Chowkhambha Sanskrit Sansthan, Varanasi, 3.2.4 प्राणाऽपाननिमेषोन्मेषजीवनमनोगतीन्द्रियान्तरविकाराः सुखदुःखेच्छाद्वेषप्रयत्नाश्चात्मनो लिङ्गानि।
76. Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter 3, p. 58.
77. This translation is from *Light of Truth* (Tr. Pandit Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya, 2005), Arya Prakashan, Ajmeri Gate, Delhi, p. 79.
78. Surendra Kumar, 2010, *Karmaphala Siddhānta: Eka Dārśnika Dṛṣṭi*, Smārikā, Rashtriya-Shodha-Sangoshthi - 'अवश्यमेव भोक्तव्यं कृतं कर्म शुभाशुभम्', Dayal Singh College, Karnal, p. 37
79. Patanjali, *Yogadarśanam*, 2.12 - क्लेशमूलः कर्माशयो दृष्टादृष्टजन्मवेदनीयः। Vyāsabhāshya on it - ...तत्र नारकाणां नास्ति दृष्टजन्मवेदनीयः कर्माशयः। क्षीणक्लेशानामपि नास्त्यदृष्टजन्मवेदनीयः कर्माशय इति।।
80. Patanjali, *Yogadarśanam*, 2.12, Vyāsabhāshya on it- ...तत्र तीव्रसंवेगेन मन्त्रतपःसमाधिभिर्निर्वर्त्तित ईश्वरदेवतामहर्षिमहानुभावानामाराधनाद्वा यः परिनिष्पन्नः स सद्यः परिपच्यते पुण्यकर्माशय इति, तथा तीव्रक्लेशेन भीतव्याधितकृपणेषु विश्वासोपगतेषु वा महानुभावेषु वा तपस्विषु कृतः पुनः पुनरपकारः; स चापि पापकर्माशयः सद्य एव परिपच्यते,...
81. Patanjali, *Yogadarśanam*, 2.12, Vyāsabhāshya on it - ... तत्र नारकाणां नास्ति दृष्टजन्मवेदनीयः कर्माशयः,...

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# CHAPTER 41

# The Almanacs deviating from the Vedic Seasons

*Darshaney Lokesh*

Jyotiṣa, one of the Vedāṅgas, is confused commonly with astrology. There are several so-called jyotishacharyas in every town and city of India, whose profession is to predict the future of their clients. Jīvātmā (the being, the soul) is free to act the way it likes: *kartum akartum anyathā kartum,*[1] and its future course of action therefore cannot be predicted. Astrology has thus no scientific basis; however, jyotiṣa as astronomy is a well established science dealing with the movements and positions of the planets.[2]

Vedic seers of ancient India had in-depth knowledge of cosmology and astronomy and it is from Aryavarta that this knowledge spread to other parts of the world. Max Müller has mentioned that Indians are not indebted to others for their knowledge of the celestial[3] bodies; instead they themselves are the repository of it. Indians consider the Vedas as the voice of God. This is evident from the Vedic texts which are the humanity's oldest scriptures.[4]

The seasons are caused by the sun due to the tilt of the earth on its axis., Ṛgveda[5] and Yajurveda[6] indicate that the year and the seasons are caused by the sun and name the Vedic months or the six seasons as *Madhu – Mādhav* (spring), *Śukra – Śuci* (summer), *Nabhas – Nabhasya* (the rainy season), *Īṣa – Ūrja* (the sultry season), *Sahas – Sahasya* (autumn) and *Tapas – Tapasya* (winter).[7] Fortnights and even intercalary months are controlled by the full moon and the new moon.[8] Arrangements of months based on seasons, insertion of extra month, and the mention of twenty-eight *nakṣatras*[9] are sufficient proof of the vast ancient Indian knowledge and visualisation of astronomy. However, the author of this paper is of the firm opinion that the modern Indian almanac-makers are making mistakes in calculations and are deviating from the Vedic seasons.

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## JYOTIṢA AND ALMANACS

***Definition– Jyotiṣa (Astrology and Astronomy)***

*Jyotiṣa*, the science of light, forms one of the six Vedāṅgas (the limbs of Vedas), the others being *Śikṣā* (phonetics), *Kalpa* (ritual text), *Nirukta* (etymology), *Chanda* (prosody) and *Vyākaraṇa* (grammar). Several mantras of Ṛgveda[10] deal with astronomy.

It is thus necessary to define Jyotiṣa (astronomy/astrology) in terms of the Veda as one of its limbs. It has been said:

"वेदानाम् अर्थज्ञानं वेदांगानां प्रयोजनम्"

*Vedānām arthajñānaṁ Vedāṅgānāṁ prayojanam.*

Meaning: to know the Veda in whole, it is important to know all the six limbs of the Veda. We should understand the parts and the whole before deriving the definition of astrology.

*Yena mādhyamena kasyacidvastunaḥ svarūpajñānaṁ bhavati tadaṅgaṁ kathyate.*[11]

Meaning: the factors by which the complete is recognised is the *anga* of that. For example, take the first part – *Śikṣā* (Education).

*Aśuddha-mantroccāraṇena mantraprayogaḥ niṣphalo bhavati.*[12]

Meaning: The incorrect recitation of a mantra, renders its use, ineffective.

*Svaravarṇādyuccāraṇaprakāro yatra śiksyate upadiśyate sā śiksā.*[13]

Jyotiṣa is the name of that part of Veda which reveals the purpose of sacrificial fires and the beneficial effects of the sacrificial ritual. In this direction, the counting of time is the main goal of astrology. The counting of time is to know the year, *Ayan, Viṣuva*, seasons, months (solar or lunar), *Sankrāṅti* and *Pūrṇimā* (Fullmoon day), and *Darśa* (New moon day) days, nights, *muhurtas* and *lagnas* (selected timings). To decide this, one must know the positions and movements of the sun, the earth, the moon and the planets. The clarification and explanation of this *Vedāṅga* by Nārada to Chāṇkya and all others is available in the texts. *Jyotiṣashāstra* is clear that

*Yasmādetādvinā śāstre kālajñānaṁ na siddhyati.*[14]

Meaning: without these means, the knowledge of these times (कालज्ञानम्) is not possible.

When one understands the above, it is clear that horoscopes (popularly known as *janampatrī*) are not the subject of *Jyotiṣa*. Therefore, the learned holy men including Swami Dayanand Saraswati have opposed the *phalit* which is otherwise termed 'Astrology' in order to show the right path to people.

***The Importance of Almanacs***

Almanacs are the foundation pillars of Vedic culture and to abide by these is in conformity with the Vedas. The *Vedāṅga Jyotiṣam* is the first work of sage Lagadha. According to the sage,

*Vedā hi yajñārthamabhipravṛttāḥ kālānupūrvā vihitāśca yajñāḥ,*
*tasmādidaṁ kālavidhānaśāstraṁ yo jyotiṣaṁ veda sa veda yajñān.*[15]

Meaning: The prime purpose of revealing the Vedas is *Yajñas*, which must always be performed at an appropriate time. The rituals of Yajña are strictly based upon the correct computation of time and the horology is called *Kāla-Vidhāna-Shāstra*. Therefore,

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only he who knows various aspects of time, does know the *yajña.*

According to Lagadha, the Vedas are purposed for the *yajñas,*[16] and *yajñas* are purposed to follow the appropriate time. Astronomy itself is a tool to determine that appropriate time. That is why, is has been said, *Vedāṅgatvam jyotiṣasyoktamasmāt* (*Jyotiṣa* is said to be a part of the Veda). To protect the identity of the Vedas, the six limbs mentioned earlier, were created. Without these, it is neither possible to protect the true meaning of Vedic mantras, nor the recognition of the knowledge of time for the sacrificial fire. Thus, almanacs are the means to astrologically determine authoritative time.

The original measurements for calculating an almanac are available in the Vedas. Therefore, most necessary almanacs have to be in accordance with the Vedas. The current Indian almanac-makers are however, producing bogus and baseless non-Vedic almanacs which are incorrect and misleading. We are lost in almanac-science because of our deviation from the bright path shown by our revered seers of yore.

There is a clear necessity for a true Vedic almanac or calendar which is made by correct calculations. How to calculate Vedic calendars? What is wrong with the available almanacs? What should not be in those almanacs? And why has deviation from the Vedic knowledge, occurred? My main aim here is to answer these questions and to clarify perception of the Vedic almanac.

## THE REASONS FOR THE ALMANACS GOING ASTRAY

### *The View of Astrologers*

Astrologers use astronomy for predictive purposes, as per some conveniently modified rules. A number of statements are available in the principal texts of Aryabhatt, Brahmgupt, Bhāskarāchārya, etc., which match with the twelve *signs* (*rāśis*), but the Vedas do not mention any *rāśi* like *meṣa* (मेष), *vṛṣabha* (वृषभ) and so on. Astrols (*rāśis*) are not mentioned even in the great seer Lagadha's *Vedāṅga Jyotiṣam,* which is the most ancient scripture and the first authentic work on the subject. The concept of *rāśis* was imported to India from other lands. Three chapters (Principles, *Horā* and *Saṁhitā*) of astronomy emerged from Varāhamihira. *Horā* and *Saṁhitā* became astrologers' mainstay by merging with the *Jātaka* (birth chart) and *Medini Jyotiṣa* (mundane horoscopy). A wrong message was taken from the word *Siddhānta* and one scope of astrology called Horoscope was established. For *Paurāṇics* the word *Jyotiṣa* came to mean both astronomy and astrology.

### *Mishandling of the Subject*

In the race for result-oriented skills, astrologers increasingly began using lesser mathematical knowledge and fewer or no observations of the heavenly bodies. Mathematical astrology and mathematical facts were not cross-checked, with the factual sight (*dṛśya*). Thus astronomical work was ignored. Many learned people, who knew the real truth and calculations of the almanac, wrote on the subject with many 'ifs and buts', owing to their selfish interests.

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Here we must appreciate Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati for two reasons.[17] First, he has recognised the Veda-proven base (experimental way) of almanac. Secondly, he wholeheartedly accepted and proclaimed the primacy, supremacy and wholeness of the Vedas. How were we misled in this regard? In answering this, it is necessary to consider the works of astronomers like Acharya Munjāla and Vyankatesha Ketakar.

## WORKS AND DIRECTION OF ACHARYA MUNJĀLA AND VYANKATESHA

Acharya Munjāla (Shak 854 i.e. 932 A.D.) conducted a detailed study and research of *Brahma Siddhānta, Triśāntikā, Karaṇasāra, Śrīevṛaddhitantra,* etc.

### *The Rule and Subsequent Error of Ayanāṁśa*

In many texts, the positions of various planets, mathematically obtained, are different from those observed visually, and this difference was always equal to accumulated precision of Equinox.[18] Later, this accumulation was termed *Ayanāṁśa* (अयनांश).[19] In simple terms, it can be understood that equality of day and night was happening seven days before and thus differing from the day of *Meṣārka* (मेषार्क) i.e., the day of Vernal Equinox (VE). The same difference has today (Shak 1937, 2015 AD) accumulated to twenty-four days. The inability to correct the error mathematically necessitated forming a rule that adds to the difference in Equinox to the mathematical findings. This was the correct option then. But today, things are very different. The above option is not even necessary because the positions of the planets are obtained easily from visual observation through powerful telescopes in the observatories around the world. Yet, the old practice continues out of ignorance. Today, the *Pañcāṅga*-makers are just making *ayanāṁśa* corrections to the correct "observed" longitudes[20] to make them *nirayana,* the baseless.

As a result of this, the given positions are visually observed positions minus part of the Equinox, which is erroneous and totally misleading. That is why until almanac makers take into consideration the Equinoxes, they will not be able to produce correct almanacs. They should obtain planetary positions from reputed observatories. Some of the almanac makers might be doing this, but they do not need to deduct Equinox or *Ayanāṁśa.* They ought to take the positions as they are.

### *The Position of the Sun*

*Sāyana* Sun or *Nirayana* Sun, *Sāyana Sankrānti* or *Nirayana Sankrānti,* Indian *Sampāt* or Western *Sampāt,* is the language of ignorance. It may be noted that calendar or almanac is neither *Sāyana* nor *Nirayana.* The importance is of visual observation and is season bound. '*Sūrya Siddhānta*' also clearly says this:

*Tattadgativaśānnityaṁ yathā dṛktulyatāṁ grahāḥ,*
*Prayānti tat pravaksyāmi sphuṭīkaraṇamādarāt.*[21]

Meaning: The planets are to be recognised at a place where, according to their travel speed, they become visually observable. This clarifies that *Sūrya Siddhānta* has full faith in *dṛktulyatā* "दृक्तुल्यता" i.e., the visually observed positions only. Our mathematicians had

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foreseen the possibility of this error in the future. Therefore, Vyankatesha Ketakara, who was knowledgeable of *drktulyatā,* wrote in his famous book *Jyotirganitam:*

*Agre yadā drggaṇitāntaraṁ syācchanaiḥ śanaiścopacitaṁ tadā vai,*
*tat kāraṇāni kramaśo vicārya granthān paṭisṭhāḥ pariśodhayeyuḥ.*[22]

The gist is that what is real should also be mathematical. It is most important that the almanac mathematics has to be in conformity with the visual and experimental observations. There is an indication for the mathematics to be correct. For example, if the sun is on maximum south declination[23] on a particular day and we are showing it northerly i.e. *Makar Sankrānti,* as well as the sun at longitude of 270 degrees on that very date then it is correct. But if it is taken as any other day, then it is clearly a mathematical error. The effect of maximum declination of the sun is the longest night and the shortest day in the Northern Hemisphere. Thus, if the night is longest on 22nd December, it is *Makar Sankrānti* (Capricorn transit of the sun). If the northerly sun is shown in January or on some other day and *Makar Sankrānti* mentioned on a different day, then it is unscriptural. It is not mathematically and observationally correct. The longest Southerly shadow of anything in the Northern Hemisphere and the longest night, are the observational proofs and to have the sun's maximum declination mathematically is the mathematical proof.

***The Seasons and the Months***

The day with the longest Southerly shadow in the Northern Hemisphere and the longest night, as described above is the day of the midpoint of the *Hemant* and *Śiśir* seasons; this is abiding by the Vedic rules. The first Bright Fortnight (BFN) after this day is the *Māgha* Bright Fortnight; this is real and the Vedic tradition. Similarly, it is necessary that the shadow of anything on the equator becomes nil when the sun's declination becomes zero on the day of spring season or autumn season. Here, the opening of *Vaiśākha* month in spring season or *Kārtika* month in autumn season are right. This is the rule of the Vedic almanac.

Almanacs are to provide all information about Samvat (Year). Out of six seasons – winter, spring, and summer seasons occur when the sun is in northern hemisphere, and rainy, pre-winter, and autumn seasons occur when the sun is in southern hemisphere. That is the correct placement of Samvat in *Ayans, Ayan* in seasons, season in months (solar and lunar). This seasons-bound fixation is the main basis of an almanac.

The solar months are straight divisions of the seasons, whereas the lunar months subsist within the solar months. The basis of the solar months, are *Sankrāntis,* the sign-wise transits of the sun. These *Sankrāntis* are regulated by *ayans* or solstice[24] and '*sampāts* Equinoxes'. Equinoxes are always equally dividing the centre and '*ayans*' or solstices are always the starting/ending points of the seasons. There is no such rule for the moon. That is why the lunar months are dependent on the solar months. Whenever any *Sankrānti* comes, then after the very moment of that day the solar months are determined and from that solar month, the lunar months are named. Much later, months – such as *Chaitra, Vaiśākha* were named after adding coincidence of the full moon determined by 27 *nakṣatra* positions. In reality, the lunar months are solar-season

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bound and named depending upon the solar *Sankrānti*. So *Madhu, Mādhava, Śukra, Śuci* are *Chaitra, Vaiśākha, Jyeṣṭha* months. It has to be accepted that neither are there only 27 *nakṣatras* for consideration of almanac nor are they all equal in span to each other. The moon will also not conjunct with particular stars month wise.

There is no evidence of the lunar seasons in the Vedas.

*Ādityastveva sarvaṛtavaḥ*[25]

Meaning: The sun is the creator of all seasons. It has also been said:

*Sa viśvā prati cāklrpa ṛtūmrutsrjate vaśī.*[26]

Meaning: The sun is the originator of different things and the producer of the seasons. Atharvaveda etc., are the proofs.

The fundamental unit of a season is a day-and-night which the moon does not give us. The moon does not have its own light, and therefore, we cannot conduct its shadow measurements. If the moon were not to be there at all, even then the seasons, days and nights would keep happening. After knowing the real position of the sun through the shadow-measurements, we can definitely say that the planetary positions given by the most powerful observatories are in reality, visual positions. Therefore, we have come to the conclusion that there is never a need to get involved in complex mathematical computations given by different ancient principles, as the positions of the sun and the moon obtained from any recognised observatory can be accepted for calculating an almanac. I too, am doing the same for the basis of almanac, after being fully satisfied with the means of shadows.

***What is a Pañchāṅga?***

Now we will clarify some other facts and principles in agreement with the main issue. A *Pañchāṅga* is not merely of five parts – *tithi, vāra, nakṣatra, yoga,* and *karaṇa*, rather it has eleven natural parts. We should know that all these parts are not estimated or guessed but are visually observed. These do not include the so-called *Yogas*, because these *Yogas*, which have been included in above-mentioned five parts, have no existence in the sky. Therefore, these *Yogas* are counted uselessly in the almanac and I have removed them from the *Shri Mohan Krity Ārṣa Tithi Patrak.*

The parts of the *Pañchāṅga* are: (1) Solstices, (2) Equinoxes, (3) Seasons, (4 and 5) Months (solar and lunar), (6) Fortnights, (7 and 8) *Tithi* i.e., date (solar and lunar), (9) Day duration, (10) Night duration, and (11) *nakṣatra.* We get the description of all the months and seasons in the Yajurveda.

*Madhuśca mādhavaśca vāsantikāvṛtū'agnerantaḥśleṣo'si kalpetāṁ....*[27]

In chapters 14 and 15, there is a separate description of the seasons and all these are dependent upon the ecliptical[28] positions of the sun and movements of the moon and the earth. The whole subject of calendars is directed by the sun. Therefore, the lunar months are ruled and controlled by the solar months and not vice-versa. That is why there are 12 solar months whereas, in case of the lunar months there is provision for extra or increased month and decayed or decreased month. This all should exist.

Sūrya Siddhānta also agrees:

*Soureṇa dyuniśormānaṁ ṣaḍaśītimukhāni ca.*
*ayanaṁ viṣuvaccaivaṁ sankrānteḥ puṇyakālatā.*[29]

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Meaning: The value of day and night, *ayanas* i.e solistices, *viṣuva* i.e. Equinoxes, and the holy time of *Sankrāti* is determined by Solar measures.

The occurrence of *viṣuvadvaya* means Spring and Winter Equinoxes, *Ayaṇadvaya* means Northern and Southern (winter and summer solstices) – also mathematical and observational because their relation is with zero or maximum declination of the sun and secondly on that day, the day and nights are clearly visible on the entire earth. Due to shadow result on Northern equinox, day shadow will extinguish on the *Makara Rekhā* region. Due to the maximum declination, the sun's position is on 270 degree and that is the meaning of *Makar Sankrānti.* Since the Veda advises only a seasons-bound almanac. Therefore, according to the seasons' arrangement Northerly day, *Makara Sankrānti, Māgha Sankrānti* and starting day of the winter season will be the same. In the same pattern *Kark Sankrānti, Śrāvaṇa Sankrānti* and the starting day of the rainy season will be the same. Naturally, 1st BFN happening after the southerly sun will be known as the *Śrāvaṇa śukla pakṣa* i.e. *Śrāvaṇa* BFN.

***The Correction of Errors***

It is now very clear that on the incorrect determination of any *Sankrānti,* the solar month and accordingly, the lunar month also are conditioned to be determined wrong. In such cases, determining the days of festivals, which is another important goal of the almanac or calendar shall never be fulfilled. In this situation, all the months and fortnights will be messed up.

*Śiva Mahāpurāṇa* explains the connections of *Sankrāntis* with Equinoxes and Solstices in the words:

*Tasmād daśaguṇajñeyaṁ ravisankramaṇe budhāḥ;*
*viṣuve tad daśaguṇamayane taddaśasmṛtam.*[30]

Meaning: that the basis or reason of any calendar, whether right or wrong is only the determination of right or wrong *Sankrāntis.* Rest of the dates, days, nights, sunrise etc., are only simple matter of calculation.

After studying the principle scriptures and the report of the Calendar Reform Committee,[31] I have adopted what is in accordance with the Vedic guidance for the calendar and have left out the rest. For example, from *Meenārk* month (the sun's transit to Pisces i.e., *Meena rāṣi*) of *Madhu* is taken and that very *Madhu* month is the beginning of the spring season. Here, we do not agree with the report of the Calendar Reform Committee. Similarly, the lunar months are taken from the calculations of *Śuklādi* i.e., every lunar month starts with the opening of the bright fortnight while it closes with the end of the dark fortnight. To calculate the months, the dates of *Madhu - Mādhava* etc., are taken into consideration and adopted with such a method that the order of the dates (*Gatey* – गते in Hindi) matches with the popular English calendar. This is a very important determination. In determining the days of fasts and festivals, consideration is given to the recommendations of the Calendar Reform Committee.

The sun's transiting day of *Aries* (*Meṣārk*) of the spring season is one day when the sun attains zero longitude, zero declination (*Śūnya Krānti*) and R.A. (*Viṣuvānśa*). Thus, the days are equal to nights (*Dinmāna* = *Rātrimāna*). This day is mathematically

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and visually provable as in the case of *Uttarāyaṇa* and *Dakṣiṇāyaṇas.* At the equatorial region, shadow extinction is also observable. This day is so authentic that on this day one can find out the local latitude[32] (*Akṣānśa*) of any place based on the angle of the shadow. This day will also be the day of starting *Mādhava* month i.e., the second month of the spring season. The first BFN happening after this day will be known as *Mādhav* or *Vaiśākha śukla pakṣa.*

## THE IMPORTANT POINT ABOUT NAKṢATRAS

The fact that there are 28 *nakṣatras* and not 27, is well known to the experts. It is usually said that, 'The *Vedāṅga jyotiṣām*' (a famous work of *Lagadha*) mentions 27 *nakṣatras.* On the one hand, we call the '*Vedāṅga jyotiṣām*' an authentic book and on the other hand, we talk of mending the almanac based on the 28 unequal *nakṣatras* against the 27 equal *nakṣatras.*

### *A Vedic Almanac*

In the amended almanac named *Shri Mohan Kriti Ārṣa Tithi Patrak,* we have fully followed the Vedic rules of real *Sankrāntis* (the sun's transit dates) along with season-bound almanac and we fully followed the 28 unequal *nakṣatra* as per the Atharvaveda[33] and *Yogatārās* (junction star) given in the report of the Calendar Reform Committee.

We must understand that the *Vedāṅga jyotiṣām* is a mathematical book and it was not possible to explain clearly the philosophy of the Vedas in terms of mathematics with the help of the then available technical developments. That is why many mathematical conveniences have been adopted in the *Vedāṅga jyotiṣām.* One of these is to adopt 27 *nakṣatras.* Because a full circle (360 degrees) cannot be fully divided by 28, hence only 27 *nakṣatras* have been accepted. In the present age, when we are technically capable of truly following the Vedic guidelines and their mathematical aspect, then why should we not take a step forward from 'the *Vedāṅga jyotiṣām*'? This step was indeed taken in the preparation of *Shri Mohan Kriti Ārṣa Tithi Patrak* (The only *Vaidik Pañchāṅga*).

Visual and known longitudes obtained from the sky by powerful telescopes in observatories are different. None of the nakṣatra is 13° 20′ span. In reality, the *Chitrā nakṣatra* is the smallest and *Dhaniṣṭhā nakṣatra* is the biggest one. It can be seen that except *Shri Mohan Krity Ārṣa Tithi Patrak* no other almanac shows their reality.

One can say that a calendar (almanac) which cannot show the *nakṣatras* with their real longitudes is anything but an almanac. The Calendar Reform Committee has decided *Yogatārās* for the *nakṣatras* and an almanac ought to show the determined time of the junction star (*yogatārā*) of *nakṣatras* so that one knows if the moon is in that *nakṣatra* or not. This will be the second big proof of the best calendar. All learned people accept this fact in principle but in reality all almanacs deny this truth. In this condition, the popular almanac may not even provide auspicious time based on *nakṣatras.* I say that according to the popular almanac if a person is shown to be born in *Aśvinī, Maghā* or *Mool nakṣatra,* then it must be understood that even those *nakṣatras* may only be rarely present at that time according to their correct longitudes. This

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should be the one of the main reasons for reforming our almanacs. All 28 *nakṣatras* are clearly shown in the Atharvaveda[34] and *Sūrya Siddhānta.*[35] Some authors of books on astrology, agree on 27 *nakṣatras* in accordance with the Yajurveda.[36] In reality, this mantra has nothing to do with the *nakṣatras.*

***Persistent Mistakes by the Astrologers***

Some people want to see the problems of almanacs with a view of predictive astrology. Almanac reform is an independent and separate problem. It should be undertaken without such considerations, or else unknowingly, we might generate such incorrect information that the coming generations would be celebrating *Makar Sankrānti* in spring, summer or the rainy season. It is worth noting how not only the almanac-readers, but the famous astrologers are also confused. We received a comment on '*Sūrya Siddhānta*' from the Head of the Department of Astrology of a Sanskrit university, on the subject of *Tripraśnādhikāraḥ:*[37]

इष्टकाले लग्नायनम्।

*Iṣṭakāle Lagnāyanam.*

Meaning: Working out the ascendant for a given time.

The gentleman gave an excellent explanation of *Shlokas* 46-48 but deliberately at the end of his explanation, added, "this way the *Lagna* comes as *Sāyana* i.e., tropical and therefore by deducting the *Ayanānsh* there will be *Nirayana Lagna* i.e., the sidereal.

Now, the point to be noted is that the last line of the *shloka* is भागहीनं च युक्तं हि तल्लग्नं क्षितिजे तदा। (*Bhāgahīnaṁ ca yuktaṁ hi tallagnaṁ kṣitije tadā*). Here it is only said, तल्लग्नं क्षितिजे तदा। (*Tallagnaṁ kṣitije tadā*) and not तन्न निरयनं लग्नं हि क्षितिजे तदा। (*Tanna nirayanaṁ lagnaṁ hi kṣitije tadā*). Had '*Sūrya Siddhānta*' meant anything like this, its writer would himself have given such an arrangement that *Tanna nirayanaṁ lagnaṁ kṣitije tadā.* If something is not acceptable to the *Sūrya Siddhānta,* then why is it being said by some scholars, forcibly and deliberately? There are many such examples. If the Head of the Department of a reputed Sanskrit University makes such incorrect statements, what then can be expected from a common person?

Some almanac-makers have given the time of *Nirayana Lagna* in their almanacs. This too, is untenable. The *Lagna Vindu* or ascending point is always a part of the ecliptic *Krāntivṛtta* (क्रान्तिवृत्त) and the observer himself is on the earth, and that ascending point can never be *nirayana.* Therefore, the author of *Surya Siddhānta* has given the correct method for calculating *Sāyana Lagna* i.e., the tropical ascendant. We have to remember that the Sun, *Rāhu* and *Ketu* are also on the ecliptic. Therefore, their latitude is always zero. When the position of the sun is not at all sidereal i.e., *nirayana,* then how can the calculation of lunar months, including intercalary months etc., be determined by an unnatural way based on such a factious sidereal sun?

***Examples of Mistakes in Festival-dates***

As explained earlier, the entire subject of calendar is directed by the sun. There shall not be any bright or dark fortnight, and their dates (lunar *tithis*), orbital nodes i.e., *Rahu-Ketu,* eclipse, and moonlight nights without the moon. Everything else is bound by

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the seasons. That is why, in determining the festivals, the use of the Solar months shall be continued. Here, is an example. We will talk about the festivals of *Rakshābandhana* and *Shri Krishna Janmāṣṭamī* of Samvat" 2070. *Karka Sankrānti* i.e., *Dakṣiṇayaṇa* or *Śrāvana sankrānti* happened at 10:34 on thirteenth day of the *Āṣāḍa Śukla* of *Suci* month 31 *Gatey* (June 21, 2013). In this case, *Śrāvaṇa Śukla Pakṣa* i.e., bright fortnight of the *Śrāvana* lunar month happened on 18 Gatey of Nabhasa month (July 9, 2013). Then *Rakshābandhana* was on 22th July and on 29th July was the festival of *Shri Krishna Janmāṣṭamī*. Winter season (*Śaradarṭu*) began on 23rd August with the opening of Isha month. Therefore, due to the incorrect almanac, people celebrated Rakshābandhana in lunar *Bhādra* and *Shri Krishna Janmāṣṭamī* in lunar *Āśvina*. That means, the festival of rainy season was celebrated in the winter season. Similarly, the festival of *Rām navami* was not celebrated on the 9th day of lunar '*Madhu*', and was instead celebrated in lunar *Mādhava*. These mistakes are all a result of the incorrect almanacs.

***Conclusion***

The current sciences of astronomy and mathematics are more useful for help in making almanacs. Observed mathematics obtained from them is totally acceptable. We have accepted the switch-over to metric measurements and weights and hours and minutes from *ghati, pala, vipala; mana, sera, chhatānka*; and yard, foot, inch etc. Did we suffer any loss by doing so? With time, man's needs change and new invention happens. Slowly, the resources and means of satisfying those needs, change. Man leaves the previous lug of the ladder as he climbs upwards. Change is the basis of newness and culture. Then why we should not change in the area of almanac calculations?

In ancient times, there were no words like *Sāyana* or *Nirayana* but due to observational experience all ancient principles are already based on today's '*Sāyana*' i.e., tropical calculations. Real identifications of satellites encircling the earth, obtained from the observatories, are also *Sāyana* i.e. tropical in reality. It is time to use the information given by observatories, which give us the positions of the planets, aided by information from satellites and other tools. There is no need of any so-called *ayanānśa* correction in the positions given by these observatories.

The bottom line is that our almanacs have deviated from our Vedic seasons and are continuing to do so. That is why some important points regarding the errors and corrections have been stated here. Until the *Pañchāṅga* makers of our country rid themselves of the controversy of *Sāyana-Nirayana* and the concepts like *Ayanānśa*, it will be impossible for them to make a correct almanac. It is time to change and accept a correct almanac, which is also in accordance with the Vedic principles.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. कर्तुम् अकर्तुम् अन्यथा कर्तुम्
2. This introductory paragraph is by the editor.
3. Celestial (भचक्रीय) is a great circle of the celestial sphere drawn halfway between the pole and is the great circle in which plane of the earth's equator cuts the celestial sphere.
4. For details see Rishi Dayanand, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā* and *Satyarth Prakash*.

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5. *Ṛgveda*, 6.32.5.
6. *Yajurveda*, 7.30, 13.25, 14.6-27, 15.57 and 18.28.
7. मधु–माधव, शुक्र–शुचि, नभस्–नभस्य, ईष–ऊर्ज, सहस्–सहस्य एवं तपस्–तपस्य।
8. *Ṛgveda*, 1.25.8.
9. *Atharvaveda*, 19.07.2-5
10. *Ṛgveda*, 1.164.11-48.
11. येन माध्यमेन कस्यचिद्वस्तुनः स्वरूपज्ञानं भवति तदङ्गं कथ्यते।
12. अशुद्ध-मन्त्रोच्चारणेन मन्त्रप्रयोगः निष्फलो भवति।
13. स्वरवर्णाद्युच्चारणप्रकारो यत्र शिक्ष्यते उपदिश्यते सा शिक्षा।
14. यस्मादेतद्विना शास्त्रे कालज्ञानं न सिद्ध्यति।
15. Lagadha, *Vedāṅga Jyotiṣa*, Shri Babasaheb Apte Smarak Samitee, Nagpur, 1.36;
वेदाः हि यज्ञार्थमभिप्रवृत्ताः कालानुपूर्वा विहिताश्च यज्ञाः। तस्मादिदं कालविधानशास्त्रं यो ज्योतिषं वेद स वेद यज्ञान्॥
16. Maharshi Dayanand and Arya Samaj do not accept this view point.
17. Maharshi Dayanand mentions in Satyarth Prakash that:
The Ṛg-veda, the Yajur-veda, the Sāma-veda and the Atharva-veda are the revealed books of God. But the following books are of sages; (1) The four Brāhaṇas:– Aitareya, Śatapatha, Sāma and Gopatha, (2) six Vedāṅgas:– Śikṣā, Kalpa, Vyākaraṇa, Nirukta-Nighaṇṭu, Chanda and Jyotiṣa, (3) six Upāṅgas or books on systems of philosophy, e.g., the Mīmānsā; (4) Four Upa-vedas: Āyur-veda, Dhanur-veda, Gāndharva-veda and Arth-veda... (books other than the Vedas are *parataḥ pramāṇa*)
He further says:
...Two years should be devoted to the study of astronomy (Jyotiṣa shāstra, Sūrya Siddhānta etc.) comprising of arithmetic, algebra, geography, geology and science of space. Manual training and mechanical engineering should also receive due attention. But nobody should ever study the false and spurious literature of astrology – the effects of stars, horoscope making or finding auspicious moments etc.
See Maharshi Dayanand, 2005, *Light of Truth*, English translation of *Satyarth Prakash* by Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya, Arya Prakashan, Delhi, pp. 93-94.
18. The points where the ecliptic and equator intersect are called the equinoctial points or the equinoxes. Vernal Equinox is the point through which the sun ascends from the southern to the northern side of the equator. Autumnal Equinox is that through which the sun descends from the northern to southern side of the equator. Equinoxes are thus identified by the days of a year when the length of day and night are equal. Vernal Equinox bisects the spring season whereas Autumnal Equinox bisects the autumn season. When the apparent longitude of the sun is zero degree, it is Vernal Equinox and when 180 degree, it is Autumnal Equinox. Days and nights are equal on these points.
19. Due to precession of the equinoxes (Ayana chalana) the Vernal Equinox point is receding back over the Ecliptic at the rate of about 50.3 second are per year. This amount is called as Ayanānśa (अयनांश).
20. Longitude or Bhogānśa (भोगांश) east or west distance of the Vernal Equinox. It is measured along the Epileptic from Vernal Equinoctial point.
21. *Sūrya Siddhānta,* chapter Spaṣṭādhikāraḥ, shloka 2.14; तत्तद्गतिवशान्नित्यं यथा दृक्तुल्यतां ग्रहाः । प्रयान्ति तत् प्रवक्ष्यामि स्फुटीकरणमादरात् ॥
22. Dattatreya Vyankatesha Ketakara, 2008, *Jyotirgaṇitam*, shaloka 32, Varanasi, p. 348; अग्रे यदा दृग्गणितान्तरं स्याच्छनैः शनैश्चोपचितं तदा वै। तत् कारणानि क्रमशो विचार्य ग्रन्थान् पटिष्ठाः परिशोधयेयुः॥
23. Declination (क्रान्ति) and Right Ascension (विषुवांश) in this co-ordinate system, the primitive Plane is Equator. The right ascension of a point of the sphere is the arc of the equator intercepted between its circle of declination and the vernal equinox, and is reckoned from the vernal equinox eastward from 0°-360°, or in time, from 0 to 24 hours. The declination of

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a point of the sphere is its distance from the equator measured on a circle of declination. The point of observation being supposes at the centre of the earth, neither the declination nor the right ascension will be affected by the diurnal motion, so that these co-ordinates are wholly independent of the observer's position on the surface of the earth.

24. Solstices or Solstitial Points (उत्तरायण - दक्षिणायन) - These are the points of the ecliptic 90° from the equinoxes. They are distinguished as the northern and southern or the Summer and Winter Solstices. The sun is at maximum declination and days are either shortest (WS) or longest (SS).
25. *Śatapatha Brāhamaṇa*, 2.2.3.9; आदित्यस्त्वेव सर्वऋतवः।
26. *Atharvaveda*, 6.36.2; स विश्वा प्रति चाक्लृप ऋतूंरुत्सृजते वशी।
27. *Yajurveda*, 13.25; मधुश्च माधवश्च वासन्तिकावृतूऽअग्नेरन्तःश्लेषोऽसि कल्पेतां.... ।
28. Ecliptic (क्रान्तिवृत्त) is the great circle of the celestial sphere in which the sun appears to move in consequence of the earth's motion in its orbit. The Position of the ecliptic is not absolutely fixed in space; but according to the definition just given, its position at any instant coincides with that of the great circle in which the sun appears to be moving at that instant.
29. *Sūrya Siddhānta*, Mānādhyāyaḥ, 14.3; सौरेण द्युनिशोर्मानं षडशीतिमुखानि च। अयनं, विषुवच्चैवं संक्रान्तेः पुण्यकालता।
30. तस्माद् दशगुणज्ञेयं रविसंक्रमणे बुधाः। विषुवे तद् दशगुणमयने तद्दशस्मृतम्।
31. A seven member Calendar Reform Committee headed by Prof. M.N. Saha, F.R.S., Director, Institute of Nuclear Physics, Calcutta was appointed in November 1952 by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research to examine all the calendars which were being followed in the country.
32. Latitude (शर) south or northward of the Equator. Sun, Rahu, Ketu and Lagna are always on the Ecliptic and their latitude is always zero.
33. *Atharvaveda*, 19.7.2-5
34. *Ibid.*, 19.7.2-5; 19.8.2
35. *Sūrya Siddhānta*, Nakṣatragrahayutyadhikāraḥ, shloka 2-9
36. *Yajurveda*, 9.7
37. *Sūrya Siddhānta*, Tripraśnādhikāraḥ, shloka 4-8

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# CHAPTER 42

# Pañcamahāyajñas: The Five Great Duties of the Aryas*

*Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya*

## YAJÑA

Yajña is the performance of one's duty, in the widest sense. All the four Veda Saṁhitās are one in respect to these performances. It is through *yajña* that one attains the highest attainable. It is the *yajña* that liberates one from the shackles of bondage; it is again the *yajña* through which one gets worldly prosperity – wealth, reputation, enlightenment and family-comforts. *Yajña* is not a ritual; it is a dedication to the society and the environment, and finally, an obligation to the Lord Supreme.

The word *yajña* is derived from √yaj, √यज्, which has three connotations, *devapūjā* (देवपूजा), *saṅgatikaraṇa* (संगतिकरण) and *dāna* (दान).[1] Reverence to men of enlightenment, harnessing Nature's bounties for the social good and keeping one's environs free of pollution – this is *devapūjā*.[2] The *devas* may be organic or inorganic, living or non-living, *cetana* or *jaḍa* i.e., with or without consciousness. A reverential attitude towards a living being is different from the attitude towards a non-living object. Both of them are to be invoked and evoked. Invocation of a personal deity is different from the invocation of a personified deity or from the invocation of deified natural forces. Again, the *devas* may be, both human and non-human. The word *pūjā* means adoration, invocation or appropriate homage, which in the limiting case of a non-sentient being, means proper utilisation or *samyak-vyavahāra* (सम्यक् व्यवहार). Strengthening and enriching the society by organising benevolent institutions, helping mechanical and chemical industries, developing science and technology – all this is *saṅgatīkaraṇa*. Charity and benevolent help given to others are *dāna*.

Swami Dayanand explains the concept of *yajña* as follows:

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> Yajña is a term covering all the actions done for showing reverence to the men of learning, all scientific inventions and their application, all chemical processes, all educational activities and charities, all performances of Agnihotra, Homa etc., (fire-rituals) for the purification of air, rain, water, herbs etc., for the increase of human happiness – I regard *yajñas* as excellent undertakings.[3]

The Sanskrit word *yajña* (यज्ञ) is oft-translated as 'sacrifice'. (For a comprehensive conceptualisation of the term, please see, note 4 - Ed.). But both *yajña* and 'sacrifice' have lost their original significance. The word 'sacrifice' comes from the Latin *Sacer*, sacred and *facio* to make, i.e., a holy act. As explained earlier, the word *yajña* comes from the Sanskrit root *yaj* which means *devapūjā* (God worship), *saṅgatikaraṇa* (union, chemical process) and *dāna* (charity). In the first verse of the Yajurveda, a synonym used for *yajña* is 'the noblest act'.[5]

It is rather strange that the word *yajña* should be used by some in the sense of killing an animal as an offering at the altar of a deity. A synonym for *yajña* is *adhvara* (अध्वर), which etymologically means an act that forbids giving pain to any being. Killing of animals was originally not permissible in the Vedic *yajña*. But in the later ages, due to the misconstruction of certain Vedic injunctions, people appear to have adopted the practice of killing animals in the *yajñas*. A similar fate appears to have been of the word 'sacrifice' too. The development is traceable as follows. At first, the word *yajan* meant a noble act. And what is nobler than suffering in order to alleviate the pain of others! Thus, the word came to mean self-denial or even courting death for the good of others. But the weaker part of man's nature tempted him to provide a substitute for his own self. This substitution too, underwent several stages. Initially, only the dearest ones were offered. Later, the idea of barter took hold of the human mind and thus the deity was supposed to be appeased with any animal. It was presumed that if an animal is killed in the name of God, He would be pleased with the killer. What a terrible fall! On the one side is the idea of self-suffering for the good of others, and on the other is the idea of giving pain to others for the sake of an imaginary good to oneself!

So much for the etymology of the words, *yajña* and sacrifice. We intend in this article, to use these words in the sense in which they were originally used, for two reasons. Firstly, no other words are so comprehensive, and at least the Sanskrit word *yajña* has been so frequently used in its original sense throughout the Vedic literature, that it is impossible to dispense with it altogether. Secondly, the false notions attached to these words can only be shaken off by constantly using them in their original sense.

## PAÑCAMAHĀYAJÑAS

An Arya is advised to perform the following five great sacrifices or duties:[6]

(i) *Brahmayajña* or (*Rishiyajña*): the study of holy scriptures

(ii) *Devayajña:* homa or oblation of clarified butter and odorous, medicinal herbs in fire

(iii) *Pitryajña:* the act of satisfying one's parents

(iv) *Bhūtayajña:* giving food to the dependent persons and domestic animals

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(v) *Atithiyajña:* the hospitality extended to guests

According to Manu, one should not neglect these daily duties, as far as possible.[7]

The five *yajñas* or sacrifices have not even the remotest link to the killing of animals or offering of their flesh to a deity. When the pain inflicted upon tiny creatures almost unconsciously or indispensably in securing daily necessaries of life is regarded a sin, the atonement for it could never have been achieved by inflicting greater pain, and that too upon bigger animals. Secondly, if *yajña* or sacrifice means the killing of animals even for religious purposes, what would then be the meaning of the compound words *Pitṛ yajña* (parental sacrifice) or *Nar yajña* (man sacrifice)?[8] Is it not absurd to take them in the sense of patricide or homicide? The very idea is revolting, and it is indeed ironical that with the deterioration of ideals, the old Sanskrit words should so deteriorate in their significance.

## BRAHMAYAJÑA or RISHIYAJÑA

The study of Holy Scriptures or the Vedas is the *Brahmayajña.* It is a great sacrifice or supreme duty, because its performance makes one capable of exercising other virtues. It is, in fact, the mother of all virtues. The study of the Vedas is a refresher of the principles upon which the Vedic civilisation is based. The daily morning reminder of one's ideals encourages the psychological change, necessary to live up to those ideals. A man is what his mind is. And his mind is what he reads. Therefore, the daily study of the Vedas is deservedly supreme among the daily duties.[9]

The *Brahmayajña* includes the daily prayers offered to God.[10] These prayers are a part of the Vedas, and their thoughtful recitation is a meditation on God. This is the chief aim of prayers. Prayers are not the praise of God in order to please or flatter Him. They are the contemplation of His attributes, so that one's mind be changed and one's spirits, ennobled. They are a sure means to one's steady spiritual evolution. When one sings of the mercy that God extends to us constantly, one's mind is transferred from the concrete merciful deeds to the abstract mercy itself, till the noble virtue becomes a part and parcel of one's inner self and one rises on the ladder of spirituality.

The prayers generally in vogue are open to several objections and much of the atheism that prevails is due to the misguided theism of the ignorant devotees. The recitation of a mysterious formula or a particular name is no prayer. The verses of a prayer should not only be well understood, but should also inspire. The most essential feature of prayer is inspiration, without which mere mummery of words is useless. When praying, a devotee ought to feel uplifted and united with a higher power. The prayers enjoined in the Vedas are really ennobling, and if performed in the right spirit, are sure to inspire and improve humanity.

## DEVAYAJÑA

*Devayajña* is a scientific process of the purification of air through the oblations of clarified butter and medicinal or odorous herbs in the sacred fire.[11] Manu says, 'the

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oblations offered to the fire rise up to the sun. From the sun comes rain; from rain, corn; and from corn, the world'.[12]

The Yajurveda ordains that just as grass is given to the horse every day without any carelessness, similarly, O fire, let us not allow thee to be extinguished by neglecting the *homa*, because the daily *homa* is a means of prosperity.[13] The Yajurveda further says, 'we offer oblations to the fire which is placed in the navel of the earth so that we may be prosperous'.[14]

Both the *Brahmayajña* and the *Devayajña* are to be performed twice everyday by the householder. If a man does not perform the former, he is thankless to his maker and loses all spiritual advantages that accrue from the contemplation of the Great Spirit (*Paramātmā*). If he does not perform the latter, he is guilty of the non-payment of the great debt which is owed to the forces of nature, named the *Devas* in Sanskrit.

Pure air is a necessity of life and the best means of purifying the air is the performance of *homa*. Every debtor is required to pay up the debts if he wants to escape the penalties. We constantly make air, water and earth impure by our daily actions and are thus indebted to the forces of nature. If we want to escape the penalty of being a defaulter, it is imperative that we should perform the daily *Havan* and remove the impurities that are a danger to our physical well-being. The performance of *homa* is also the most urgent of all the rules of sanitation. It is a *mahāyajña* or great sacrifice in as much as its infringement is attended with heavy penalties i.e., disease and death.

## PITṚYAJÑA

We owe much, if not all, of what we are, to our parents. To none except God, are we indebted so much. Our very physical self emanates from them. They not only beget us and bring us up, but over and above all this, they hand over to us the great heritage of civilisation, which in their turn they had got from their ancestors. They are the immediate link between us and the old sages. Gratitude is due to those who abnegated all their comforts and even bare necessaries to make our life comfortable at the time when we were hardly conscious of our needs, and they should be well-attended to. Providing them with water and food and fulfilling their other needs, is called *Shrāddha* and *Tarpaṇ*.

Over time, *Shrāddha* and *Tarpaṇ* came to mean offerings to the souls of the dead. This was not the original idea. The *Pitryajña* is one of the daily duties of the householder Aryas, and is due towards one's living parents, not towards the dead.

## BHŪTAYAJÑA (BALIVAIŚVADEVAYAJÑA)

*Bhūta* means one's dependents, servants, domestic animals and the creatures that deserve our sympathy in several other ways. The sacrifice referred to here, is providing them with food etc.

The householder is the centre of the whole society. It is he, to whom all others look for help and maintenance. Just as with the help of air, all animate beings live, all classes depend similarly upon the householder.[15] Therefore, it is essential for him to

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take care of the needs of all those who are not in a position to earn their livelihood or are his dependents. If householders regard it a religious duty to provide for all their dependants, many social problems and inequities would surely disappear.

## ATITHIYAJÑA

*Atithiyajña* is the hospitality extended to the guests. The Vedas consider it irreligious that the stranger or the helpless be denied food and drink at the door of an Arya householder. Is it not the society as a whole that has helped in the prosperity of the householder? If so, then what right has he to enjoy that prosperity alone! The Ṛgveda ordains that "The exclusive eater becomes the exclusive sinner."[16] It is the watchword of the Vedas. There are several hymns in the Atharvaveda, devoted to the importance of hospitality. The Atharvaveda maintains that "One who eats before (without feeding) the guest eats away i.e., destroys his own prosperity."[17] The householder, who eats before serving his guest, destroys his fame and glory.[18]

The chief guests in the *Atithiyajña* are the Sannyāsins or the religious preachers who care little for their livelihood and devote all their time and energy to philanthropic work. These Sannyāsins ought to be well-versed in the Holy Scriptures and should be impartial, selfless and energetic. They should be such, to whom the world may safely look for guidance. If such a person arrives at the door of an Arya, it is his paramount duty to extend to him, a cordial welcome,[19] because who will feed him, if not a householder! In fact, such Sannyāsins live for him and not for themselves.

These Sannyāsins or spiritual guides should not be confused with a host of beggars or professional mendicants who roam the towns and villages of India. The *Atithiyajña* was never meant to encourage idlers. Misguided charity has done much harm, as any good principle can be abused.

The main idea of the *Atithiyajña* is to secure the position of those who dedicate their lives to the sacred work of ameliorating the condition of others. In addition to these peripatetic teachers of religion, the term *atithi* includes the guests whose arrival is unexpected and who as strangers, merit help, for the word *atithi* literally means the one whose date is not fixed, i.e., who arrives unexpectedly.

These are the five *Mahāyajñas* (महायज्ञ) that an Arya householder ought to perform every day. They deal with three important aspects of religious life, i.e., spiritual, physical and social. The *Brahmayajña* has a spiritual aspect, the *Devayajña*, physical and the remaining three, social. Then again, these are so blended together that they produce a homogeneous whole.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

* The first editor of the volume has condensed and edited '*The Five Great Sacrifices of the Aryas*' by Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya and published by Arya Samaj Chowk, Allahabad in 1935. The two opening paragraphs have been taken, with minor grammatical changes, from Swami Satya Prakash Saraswati's (Tr.), 2012, *Yajurveda*, Vol. I, DAV Publication Division, Delhi, pp. 5, 137. Swamiji was the eldest son of Pandit Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya.

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Most of the following references have been added by the editor.

1. देवपूजासंगतिकरणदानेषु। (*Dhātupāṭha* 1.728).
2. *Devapūjā* has a very wide significance, depending on what we understand by the term *deva*. *Dhātupāṭha* 4.1 elucidates this term दिवु क्रीडा–विजिगीषा–व्यवहार–द्युति–स्तुति–मोद–मद–स्वप्न–कान्तिगतिषु।
3. Dayanand Saraswati, *Svamantavyāmantavyaprakāsh*, 28. see *Satyarth Prakash*, English Tr. Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya, 2005, Arya Prakashan, Delhi, pp. 749-760.
4. According to Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi, "The word *yajña* which originally indicates any action requiring association of men or objects, and productive of beneficial results, is always translated by European scholars as 'sacrifice.' The notion of sacrifice is a purely Christian notion, and has no place in Vedic philosophy. It is foreign to the genuine religion of India. Hence all translations in which the word 'sacrifice' occurs are to be rejected as fallacious." See, *Works of Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi* (ed. Ram Prakash, Dr., 2013), Kusumlata Arya Pratisthan, Sahibabad, Ghaziabad, p. 36. It so happened that Sāyaṇa, Mahīdhara and the like recommended animal sacrifices in Yajñas. This concept suited the Europeans and they thus coined the term 'sacrifice' for Yajña.
5. *Yajurveda*,1.1; *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, 1.7.1.5
6. *Manusmriti*, 4.21, please see Dayanand Saraswati, 1947, *Pañcamahāyajñavidhi*, Arya Sahitya Mandal, Ajmer.
7. *Manusmriti*, 3.70,71
8. For details, see, Tulsi Ram, Dr., *Veda: The Technique of Interpretation*, chapter 22, pp. 339-362.
9. See, The third Principle of Arya Samaj.
10. Dayanand Saraswati, 1934 Vikrami, *Pañcamahāyajñavidhi*, pp. 5–27.
11. Ram Prakash, Dr., 2005, *Yajña-Vimarsh*, Satyarth Prakashan, Kurukshetra; Dikshanand Saraswati, 1983, *Agnihotra Sarvasva*, Samarpan Shodh Sansthan, New Delhi.
12. *Manusmriti*, 3.76; cf. *Gita*, 3.14
13. *Yajurveda*, 11.75
14. *Ibid.*, 11.76
15. *Manusmriti*, 3.77; also see Dayanand Saraswati, 1967, *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter 4, Arsh Sahitya Parchar Trust, Delhi, p. 122.
16. *Ṛgveda*, 10.117.6
17. *Atharvaveda*, 9.6.3.1
18. *Ibid.*, 9.6.3.5
19. *Ibid.*, 9.6.3.7; For translation of the mantras quoted in references 16, 17, 18 please see *Atharvaveda*, Vol. 1, English Tr. by Tulsi Ram, Dr., 2013, Arsh Sahitya Prachar Trust, Delhi, pp. 1022-1024.

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# CHAPTER 43

# The Sixteen Sanskārs: The Arya Rituals of Life and Death

*Jwalant Kumar Shastri*

Sanskārs are the most important ceremonies of the Aryas, related to the various stages of a person's life, from conception to death. Swami Dayanand defines a Sanskār "as that which improves the condition of the body, the mind and the soul."[1] The Sanskārs and the directives of Shāstras play an important role in inculcating meaningful human characteristics, values and virtues. By virtue of these Sanskārs, the progeny becomes more accomplished; the body and soul are refined and one can pursue the *puruṣārthacatuṣṭaya* i.e., the four goals of *Dharma, artha, kāma* and *mokṣa.*

***The Number of Sanskārs***

The credit for determining the number of Sanskārs goes to Swami Dayanand, as directed in his Sanskārvidhi. On the number of Sanskārs and their importance, Swami Dayanand says, "From conception to cremation there are sixteen Sanskārs altogether. I hold that their due and proper observance is obligatory on all. Nothing should be done for the departed soul after the remains have been cremated."[2] In the fixation of sixteen Sanskārs, we behold both the logic and the propriety of Swamiji. Over the last 140 years, the Sanskārvidhi of Rishi Dayanand has had such an impact that the number of Sanskārs has been accepted as sixteen, by the commoners and the scholars, alike.

Throughout the Vedic canonical literature, the number of Sanskārs varies from one Acharya to another. Certain Acharyas and some Gṛhyasūtrakāras have mentioned a minimum of ten and a maximum of forty-eight Sanskārs. There is a mention of fourteen Sanskārs in Manusmriti and Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra, thirteen in Āśvalāyana and Mānava Gṛhyasūtras, twelve in Kauṣitāki (Śāṇkhāyāyana), Āpastamba and Gobhila Gṛhyasūtra, eleven in Gopatha Brāhmaṇa and Jaiminīya Gṛhyasūtra and ten in Hiraṇyakeśīya Gṛhyasūtra.

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Some Gṛhyasūtras do not enumerate Vānaprastha and Sannyāsa Sanskārs because they depict only the Sanskārs performed by the householders. Swamiji incorporated these two Sanskārs in his list, on the basis of the Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas and Smriti literature. It is also to be taken into account that entrance into Brahmacharya Āshrama is made through Vedārambha Sanskār (the ritual of initiation in the learning of the Vedas) and that into Gṛhastha Āshrama through Vivāha (marriage) Sanskār. So, to enter into the Vānaprastha and Sannyāsa Āshrama, it seems to be quite appropriate to mention the Sanskārs related to both. In Gṛhyasūtras, marriage ceremony is considered as the first and Samāvartana as the last ritual or Sanskār. Leaving Āśvalāyana and Kauṣitāki Gṛhyasūtra aside, there is no description of the *Antyeṣṭi* (cremation) Sanskār anywhere else.

According to Swami Dayanand, Sanskārs begin from the union of the soul with the body i.e., impregnation and end with dissolution of this link i.e., death. According to him, the relevance of Sanskārs remains during one's life time only. Swamiji's view is corroborated by Manusmriti, which states that "right from impregnation to the last rite of the burning of the body, there is a provision of the Sanskārs in the Vedic hymns." Hence, Swamiji has given his approval to the sixteen Sanskārs or rites from impregnation to *Antyeṣṭi*.[3]

***Sanskārvidhi***

Sanskārvidhi by Swami Dayanand embodies his views on the sixteen Sanskārs and explains their purpose, procedure and benefits. His sacred precept of Sanskārs which is in accordance with the Vedas, appeals to logic and is endowed with the right code of conduct for the noble.

A comparative study of Sanskārvidhi with the Gṛhyasūtras reveals the reasoning, scholarship and *ārṣa* brilliance of Swamiji at every step. Swamiji has rejected those unscientific religious ceremonies mentioned in the Gṛhyasūtras, which are illogical and contrary to the Vedic dicta. For example, in *Śūlagāva*, the killing of a bull or an ox is mentioned in Gṛhyasūtras.[4] In *Aṣṭaka Karma*, an oblation with beef and gratification with wine has been mentioned.[5] In *Avakīrṇi* repentance, a mention is made to put on the skin of a donkey after killing it.[6] It has been advised that a slave or a servant, running away from his job, should be controlled, by putting urine upon the horn of an animal and then sprinkling it upon the sleeping slave. This provision, named as *Utūla Parimeha*, has been made in Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra.[7] For attracting a woman, many kinds of abominable acts are mentioned in *Kauśikasūtra*.[8]

Dayanand realised that the then prevailing ritualistic system was the product of the selfish pandits devoid of Vedic knowledge. He outrightly dismissed the self-serving, unscientific and illogical formulations.

Swamiji has placed all the commonly performed ritualistic acts in the beginning of the Sanskārvidhi under the caption of *Sāmānya Prakaraṇa*; so as these are not repeated time and again while describing every ritual. In the beginning of every Sanskār, Swamiji has written about the purpose of the particular Sanskār quoting the *ārṣa* treatises. After describing the method of performing a ritual, other relevant information about the Sanskār has been given.

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A special feature of Sanskārvidhi is that in the ritualistic portion, the hymns have been taken from the Vedas and *ārṣa* treatises only. The *Laukika* sentences have been removed. For example, the scriptural propriety for the conduct of a ritual, taken from Mīmānsā Bhāshya, is: *Ācāntena karma kartavyam* (a ceremony should begin with the sipping of water).[9] All Paurāṇic scholars allow the sipping of water in religious ceremonies, by reciting lines such as *Oṁ keśavāya namaḥ. Oṁ nārāyaṇāya namaḥ. Oṁ mādhavāya namaḥ.*[10] These *laukika* sentences are not even remotely linked with the sipping of water. Swamiji has used the following three mantras from Gṛhyasūtra, for the same: *Om amṛtopastaraṇamasi svāhā, Om amṛtāpidhānamasi svāhā, Om satyam yaśaḥ śrīrmayi śriḥ srayatām svāhā.*[11] This sipping of water is for the attainment of a special purpose. *Amrita* (अमृत) is used for both water and God.

In these rituals, the Paurāṇic Pandits use hymns from the Ṛgveda and the Yajurveda but none from the Atharvaveda or the Sāmaveda. Swamiji has made a provision of hymns under the caption *Śāntikaraṇa* and *Svastivācana.* In both of these, the hymns from all the Vedas are compiled and the first hymns of all the Vedas are included. The Paurāṇic Pandits do not recite hymns from the Atharvaveda in *Svastivācana* and *Sandhyā.* Here again, Swamiji has given due importance to all the four Vedas. In *Manasā parikramā* (मनसा परिक्रमा) in Sandhyā also, he makes a provision of six hymns of the Atharvaveda such as *Om prācī digagni* etc.[12]

The Sanskārvidhi has a reference -- *Atheśvara-stutiprārthanopāsanāmantrāḥ* (अथेश्वरस्तुतिप्रार्थनोपासना-मन्त्राः) -- which is not found in any treatise concerning Sanskārs like *Gṛhyasūtras* etc. In this reference, Swamiji has included and explained meaningfully, eight hymns replete with the glorification, prayer and meditation of God.

Swami Dayanand has explained the following 16 Sanskārs in Sanskārvidhi.

## 1. GARBHĀDHĀNA SANSKĀR

*Garbhādhāna* Sanskār (Impregnation ritual) is the first Sanskār.[13] For this ritual, the girl should be at least 16 years old and the boy, 25 years old.

On the basis of Manusmiriti,[14] Swami Dayanand records:

i. The husband and wife should be loyal to each other.
ii. Conception should be done at the proper time. This period is from the stoppage of menstruation up to the sixteenth day of the commencement of menstruation.
iii. For the first four nights of the menstruation period, the wife and the husband should not touch each other.
iv. For the conception of a son, sixth, eighth, tenth, twelfth, fourteenth and sixteenth nights are preferred in the descending order.
v. For a daughter, fifth, seventh, ninth and the fifteenth nights are the best.

The scriptures quoted by Swamiji for performing this Sanskār include: Manusmriti, Suśruta, Bṛhdāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra, Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra, Gobhila and Śaunak Gṛhyasūtra, Mantra Brāhmaṇas, Āpasthamba Śrautasūtra, Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, Yajurveda, Ṛgveda, Atharvaveda, Chāndogya Upaniṣad etc.

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After the common ritualistic ceremony as mentioned in the *Sāmānya Prakaraṇa* of the *agnihotra,* the oblations to be given to the sacrificial fire are: Twenty oblations of the main homa, six oblations of *ghrita* (clarified butter) and boiled rice, eight oblations of *ghrita,* (eight *Ājyāhuties*), nine oblations of *ghrita* and sweet dish (Mohan bhog) and again four oblations of *ghrita,* one oblation for *Prajāpati* and one oblation of sweet dish (*Sviṣṭakṛt*) from Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra.

After every oblation the drops of the *ghrita* which remain in the *Sruva* (wooden spoon) should be put into a bronze pot containing water, which should be mixed with the water meant for bathing. The bride (or wife) is to be then given a bath with water admixed with *ghrita.* This is to be followed by, circumambulation, the beholding of the sun and the worship of God. Then, with change of the *gotra* of the bride, her salutation to the husband, and blessings to her by those present, the ritual comes to an end.

***Food and Progeny***

Swami Dayanand considers quality food for the husband and wife, as an essential for good progeny. The couple should get medicinal food to increase their physical strength and intellectual acumen etc.[15]

This view of Swamiji is authenticated by Chāndogya Upaniṣad also. In Chāndogya Upaniṣad, the word *Āhāraśuddhi* (आहारशुद्धि), according to Swamiji, refers to ripened butter, milk, rice, wheat etc., with no meat and wine. With this fine vegetarian food (सात्त्विक आहार), the inner self (अन्तःकरण) is purified and strengthened. Manliness, sound health and intelligence are attained.[16]

Swami Dayanand ascertains the exalted rules of the woman's diet after conception. In the words of Swamiji: "Any intoxicant like wine etc., purgative like yellow myrobalan (हरीतकी), corrosive substances like a lot of salt etc., highly sour like acidic materials (इमली) etc., scraggy like gram etc., pungent like excessive use of red chilly must be avoided. But *ghee,* milk, sweets, *somalatā* (a creeper) used in medicine, rice, curd with sugar, wheat, cereals called the horse bean, the kidney bean or the black gram, lentil etc., as food element and energy-giving vegetables etc., should be taken. Seasonal spices in summer like cold white cardamom etc., and in winter *kesar* and *kasturi* should be mixed with the eatables. Only a proper diet should be always taken. Dried ginger (सूंठी) and *brahmi* medicine with milk should be taken, especially by the pregnant woman. With this, the progeny becomes intelligent, free of ailments, virtuous, good-natured and a doer of good deeds."[17]

## 2. PUNSAVANA SANSKĀR

As per Sanskārvidhi and Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra the *Punsavana* ritual is performed after two or three months of *Garbhādhāna* when impregnation becomes certain.[18]

For this, after performing *agnihotra,* two oblations as mentioned in Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra are to be offered. Then the couple should sit at a lonely place; the husband should put his hand on the heart of his wife and recite two hymns as mentioned in Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra.[19] He should then grind the delicate leaf (*kompel*) of the *Ficus*

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*bengalensis* (*vaṭa*) tree along with the *cocculous cordicolius* (*giloya*) and put three drops of the extract in the right nostril of his pregnant wife.

***The Definition of Punsavana Ritual by Swami Dayanand***

*Gṛhyasūtras* have associated the purpose of the *Punsavana* ritual with the birth of a child.[20] According to Swamiji, however, the purpose of this ritual is quite different, and is attached with the *purusatva* i.e., the gain of semen. It is the considered opinion of Swamiji that till the child is born and even after two months of his/her birth, the husband should observe celibacy and not let the sperm fall even in dream.[21] In support of the *Punsavana* Sanskār, Swamiji has quoted the hymns from the Sāmaveda and the Atharvaveda,[22] and has written that 'the only purpose of these hymns is that the child should become strong and virile'.[23]

According to Swamiji, after becoming certain about impregnation the couple should take a pledge to abstain from sexual activities to allow the progeny a proper growth in the mother's womb. The woman is sensitised to the privilege of motherhood. The sense of responsible parenting develops in the couple, a natural longing for the desired off-spring. This view point is reflected in the mantras quoted in Sanskārvidhi.

Swami Dayanand advises the would-be mother to take proper meals, remain happy, show good conduct and to shun anger, lust and jealousy so that the progeny is beautiful, healthy, strong and of a noble nature. He says: "She should take light food, should keep a happy heart and should have nice conduct."[24]

Many Acharyas relate the *Punsavana* Sanskār to the desire for a son and see the birth of a girl with utter contempt. Swamiji was strongly against any discrimination between the female child and the male child.

## 3. SĪMANTONNAYANA SANSKĀR

In Sanskārvidhi, the time period of *Sīmantonnayana* Sanskār is considered as from the fourth, sixth or eighth month of pregnancy. The main objective of this ritual is to create bliss in the heart of the pregnant lady.[25] The husband combs the hair of his wife with a parting in the middle, and the ritual is therefore known as *Sīmantonnayana.*[26] Through this ritual, in the words of Swamiji, "the mind of the pregnant lady remains contented, healthy, steadfast and excellent, and happiness increases day by day."[27] From the fourth to the eighth month of pregnancy, there is a great fear of miscarriage, particularly in the sixth and eighth months. The happiness and contentment generated in the heart of the pregnant lady, help nullify the fear of miscarriage, and thus, this ritual is meant for protection of the foetus.

A detailed description of this ritual is given in Sanskārvidhi.[28] Some of its features are as follows: After putting oblation in the holy fire, the husband and wife sit alone upon a comfortable seat. After reciting the prescribed hymns, the husband lifts and combs her hair, as per the given procedure. The pudding that remains after oblation to the sacred fire, is mixed with sufficient quantity of *ghrita* and the pregnant lady beholds her reflection in this molten *ghrita.* At that time, the husband asks his wife: *kim paśyasi* (What do you see?). The wife replies *prajām paśyāmi* (I see my progeny or off-spring in

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it). This expresses the desire to have a healthy and beautiful off-spring. The one in whom she foresees the future of the family, as per their aspirations. Thus shaping of the child into the desired one is ensured by providing congenial physical, mental and emotional conditions.

The aim of *Sīmantonnayana* ritual is that the off-spring should get *Sāttvika* Sanskārs imprinted on his/her very tender mind, while in the womb. For this, many sacred precepts are mentioned in various treatises like the *Dharmasūtras*, the *Gṛhyasūtras*, the Manusmriti, and books on *Ayurveda*. The lives of the sages and seers of ancient India, stories of famous historical figures and works like Rāmāyana and Mahābhārata speak of the importance of these Sanskārs. It was due to the Sanskārs in the womb that the valorous Abhimanyu got the skill of *Dhanurveda* and the knowledge of breaking the ring of enemies, while he was in the womb of Subhadrā, the wife of the great archer, Arjuna.

In this context, some of the important evidence from the ancient *ārṣa* treatises, is being put forward in a nut-shell:

According to *Suśruta*, those pregnant ladies who enjoy the good company of scholars and Brahmans, who live a life of purity, chastity and good conduct, have virtuous progeny, and those pregnant ladies who have a contrary conduct, have progeny, quite ordinary.[29] Manu has approved this statement of *Suśruta* as under:

> A pregnant lady produces the same kind of child, the look of the child is the same, as she keeps up in mind during pregnancy. For keeping the progeny pure in a special way, it is very important that full and appropriate efforts are made for the protection and proper care of the ladies.[30]

Dhanvantari has instructed the pregnant lady to avoid the following activities:

> The impregnated lady, up to the birth of the off-spring, should not do physical exercise, excessive labour, sex and *apatarpaṇa* i.e., the acts which cause foetus loss, excessive vomiting, sleeping during the day and staying awake at night, grief, riding, fearfulness, forceful sneezing, sitting tightly, smearing or rubbing with oil, bleeding, wilfully etc.[31]

What a mother can do for a child's development in those nine months, all the social reformers of the world cannot. The off-spring is born with the same Sanskārs, as the thoughts that influence the mind of the pregnant lady.

## 4. JĀTAKARMA SANSKĀR

*Jātakarma* is the fourth in the sequence of Sanskārs. This is performed at the time of the child-birth. Chiefly, three activities are conducted in this Sanskār: (i) Sprinkling of water on the pregnant lady who gave birth to the child and Vascular puncture of the child. (ii) Making the baby lick a mix of *ghrita* and honey, with a small gold stick. (iii) Offering oblations with yellow mustard in the holy fire for ten days in the labour room.

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***Writing the Word 'AUM'***

A very important activity in this Sanskār is to write the word AUM with ghee and honey on the tongue of the child with a gold-stick. After that, the father whispers in the right ear of the child *vedo'si* (वेदोऽसि) i.e., your secret name is Veda. Then *ghee* and honey mixed in the ratio 1:2 is given to the baby six times, after the recitation of a hymn every time.[32] The purpose of whispering *vedo'si* in the child's ear is that the father wants his child to be knowledgeable, as the literal meaning of the word Veda is knowledge.[33] In fact, knowledge and consciousness are the chief characteristics of the soul.

Some advise the initiation of learning at the age of eight, while others consider the age of seven, six or five years, as appropriate. But Swami Dayanand directs that the efforts towards the attainment of knowledge should be initiated at the time of birth itself. So the words 'AUM' and 'Veda' are imprinted on his/her mind. When at four or five years of age, the child gets to know that AUM was written on his tongue at his birth, he shall acquire love, faith and respect for the word. With education and contact with wise men, the child will learn learn that just as honey and ghee are the causes of his physical progress after removing the पित्त (bile) and cough in him, in the same way AUM is the destroyer of the three afflictions and is the cause of spiritual progress.[34]

In *Jātakarma* Sanskār, there is a provision for smelling the head of the child,[35] the way to express love and affection for the child avoiding infection due to kissing.

## 5. NĀMAKARAṆA SANSKĀR

To give an elegant name to the child is called *Nāmakaraṇa* Sanskār. It should be performed on the 11th or the 101st day or on first birthday of the child. In the presence of family members, relatives and friends, the father of the child and the *Ṛtvik* (the one who recites Vedic hymns) should perform the ritual. Besides the recitation of hymns and ritualistic performances, the following norms, given by the shāstras, have been approved by Swami Dayanand:

(i) The name should clearly convey the sense of male or female. The name of a male child should comprise even number of letters, while the name of a female child should be of odd number of letters.

(ii) The name should be meaningful and always, inspirational. As has been said in the Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra with the desire of glory and *brahmateja* successively, the name should be of two or four letters.[36]

(iii) The name should be elegant, simple to pronounce and a relish to hear.

## 6. NIṢKRAMAṆA SANSKĀR

It is the ceremony in which the child is taken out of the house for the first time. . It has been considered a celebratory occasion, makes the child happy. The child joins the world outside the periphery of the home, where he/she is to live an active social life. This ritual is performed on the third date of (*Śukla Pakṣa*) of the third month or the fourth month of the date when the child is born.

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There is a provision of reciting of a hymn in the right-ear of the child in this *Niṣkramaṇa* Sanskār. But Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra opines that in the case of a girl child, the hymn is not to be recited, and the head of the female child is to be touched without it.[37] This certainly discriminates between the male and the female child, and is a practice of the medieval period, when the place of woman in respect of man was at low ebb.

Swami Dayanand Saraswati differs with medieval Acharyas on this point. In the *Niṣkramaṇa* Sanskār he shows great wisdom by making a revolutionary amendment. According to him, the male and the female child are to be treated as equals and the ritual is to be performed by recitation of Vedic hymn in both the ears. Swami Dayanand's condemnation of the ritualistic processes which discriminate male and female is indeed praiseworthy.

## 7. ANNAPRĀŚANA SANSKĀR

In the *Annaprāśana* Sanskār, the child is given solid food for the first time. This Sanskār is conducted in the sixth month, and only when the child is able to digest such food.[38]

Swamiji has written in Sanskārvidhi with evidence from *Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra,*[39] that for the physical and intellectual health of the child, the *Annaprāśana* should be done with a pudding admixed with honey and ripened butter. Swamiji has also made a provision for offering special oblation with this pudding, after the common oblations.[40] In some *Gṛhyasūtras* like Āśvalāyana, Jaiminiya and Kaṭhaka, there is a provision of recitation of a Yajurvedic hymn in this Sanskār. Swamiji is also of the same opinion.[41]

Certain *Gṛhyasūtras* mention the eating the meat of birds and fish in lieu of the vegetarian food in the *Annaprāśana* Sanskār. However, Swamiji has rejected this, as according to him, such references are interpolations and are not to be accepted.

## 8. MUṆḌANA SANSKĀR

Several words are used for this Sanskār related to the tonsure ceremony, such as *Muṇḍana, Chuḍākarama, Keśavapana, Chaula, Kṣaura* and *Keśachedana* etc. In Sanskrit, the word *Chuḍā* is used for a single lock of hair lifted on the crown of the head. The literal meaning of *Chuḍākarma* is the act relating to the hair of the head. The word *Jūḍā* (जूड़ा) in Hindi, is the corrupted form of the *Chuḍā.*

This ceremony should be performed in the first or third year of the child in the *uttarāyana* period of the *śukla pakṣa* on a blissful day of merriment.[42]

### *The Relationship of Muṇḍana with Teething*

A child starts teething at the age of six or seven months. It continues till the age of two and a half or three years. At the time of teething, the head becomes heavy and warm, the gums are swollen and the saliva becomes slobbery. This is accompanied by loose motions, and in some cases, a lot of headache, making the child becomes irritable. To keep the head free of the heaviness and cold, the removal of the cluster of hair is called the *Chuḍākarma* Sanskār.

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***The Relationship of Chuḍākarma with the Brain***

The brain is the controlling centre of the activities of all the five sense organs and five motor organs (*kamendriyān*). In the womb, the hair on the head helps protect the skull. After three years, the bones of the skull are enjoined. So, the head is tonsured, for the following reasons:

(ii) It is good for hygiene and helps save the child from many skin ailments such as itching, shingles, lice etc.

(iii) It helps the child cope with the heat.

(iv) It helps in the growth of new hair which is thick and strong.

According to *Suśruta*,[43] towards the upper side of the head, there is a collision of vein (शिरा) and joint (सन्धि). To protect this part from injury, a *choti* or a cluster of hair is kept.[44]

Swami Dayanand allows for the use of a comb instead of prickers in accordance with the changing times.[45] At the time of *Gṛhysūtrakāras* like *Pāraskara*, the prickers of *Sveta Syāhī* were used for dressing up the hair. In the same way, before *muṇḍana* (मुण्डन), the hair was cut with the razor with *darbha* (दर्भ) or *kuśā* (कुशा) etc.[46] Swamiji has allowed the use of scissors along with a razor.[47]

The authors of treatises advise that the removed hair be placed near a water body, or be covered with cow dung and placed in a cowshed.[48] In present times, the ritual is often performed by the Hindus in the temples on the banks of rivers like the Ganga and the hair is thrown in the water. Swami Dayanand Saraswati, however, considers it inappropriate to scatter the hair in a cowshed, or a water body. He says, in Sanskārvidhi:

> The hair, the *darbha*, the *kuśā* and the cow dung should be taken to the jungle and after digging a pit, the hair should be put in that pit and then it should be covered with earth, or the same should be done by digging a pit in a cowshed or near the water of a river or a tank (or pond).[49]

## 9. KARṆAVEDHA SANSKĀR

*Karṇavedha* or piercing the ears, is the 9th ritual in Sanskārvidhi. Swami Dayanand Saraswati has said that this ritual is to be performed when the child is three to five years of age.[50] However, according to *Suśruta*, this ritual should be performed in the sixth or seventh month in the *śukla pakṣa* or a favourable day or date and the *nakṣatra muhūrta* (नक्षत्र मुहूर्त).[51]

In this respect, Dayanand agrees with Pāraskara and Kātyāyana[52] etc., but differs with *Suśruta*. Swamiji wants this ritual to be performed by a Vaidya who has studied Charak and *Suśruta* and who may pierce the hole in the ear, while saving the nerves. The Vaidya should put a pin in the ear-holes to keep them intact, and apply some ointment to help heal the ears.[53]

There is no mention of the *Karṇavedha* Sanskār anywhere, except in the *Gṛhyasūtras* of Pāraskara and Kātyāyana. In addition to Kātyāyana's *Gṛhyasūtra*, *Suśruta*[54] has clearly written that both ears of the male and the female child should be pierced to

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create holes for prevention of ailments and for wearing ornaments.[55] The *Karṇavedha* ritual helps in the prevention of ailments of the reproductive or oval organs.[56] There is a mention in Ṛgveda[57] and Manusmriti[58] of wearing the gold *kuṇḍals* in the ears. There should only be one hole in each ear.

## 10. UPANAYANA SANSKĀR

The *Upanayana* Sanskār or the ritual of wearing the sacred thread is to mark taking the child to the Guru for studies. In Sanskrit, there is a very meaningful word used for the disciple, which is *antevāsī* (अन्तेवासी) – the one who lives in the heart of the guru. By virtue of the *Upanayana Sanskār*, the guru takes his disciple as a part of his inner self.

According to Vedic view, every child has three debts[59] i.e., (i) The debt of the sages (ii) The debt of the parents, and (iii) The debt of the devtas. The three threads of *yajñopavīta* or the sacred thread, remind us of these three debts. The *Upanayana* ritual is conducted as a step towards acquiring education and then paying the three debts.

Girls also have the right to wear *yajñopavīta.* The right of *Upanayana* means the right to education. In Vedic culture, women used to study the Vedas and there was absolutely no restriction upon them.

That the *Upanayana* of girls was conducted, is authenticated by the following:

*Purā kalpe hi nārīṇaṁ maunjībandhanamisyate.*
*adhyāpanaṁ ca vedānāṁ sāvitrīvācanaṁ tathā.*[60]

It means that in ancient times, the girls had to wear मौञ्जी i.e., *yajñopavīta.* They used to study Vedas and other treatises.

Rishi Dayanand gives an extract from the Atharvaveda in Satyarth Prakash, proving that the girls have a right to study the Vedas:

*Brahmacaryeṇa kanyā'yuvānaṁ vindate patim.*[61]

The hymn means that the girl, living in celibacy, acquires perfect knowledge and best training by studying the Vedas and marries a young husband. In celibacy, she must wear the *yajñopavīta.*

In *Śrautsūtras,* it is written *Imam mantram patnī paṭhet*[62] i.e., the wife should recite this hymn. A wife can recite the hymn only when she has the right to study Vedas. The Yajurveda too, refers to a woman as *Somaprṣṭhā* (सोमपृष्ठा) which means she has a desire to study the mantras of the Vedas.

The *Upanayana* Sanskār is an important ritual in some other societies too. This ritual travelled from Vedas to other religions. Parsis, called *Yajñopavīta* as *Kusti.* The *Paigambara* of the Parsis, Spitma Jarathusth was directed by *Ahurmazda* that one who does not wear *Kusti* should be awarded the death sentence. The *Kusti* by the Parsis is baptised at the age of seven and the child ties it round his chest. It is a very important ritual for them.[63] The hymns related to the wearing of *Yajñopavīta* in Vedic culture and that of the Parsis for wearing the *Kusti* have almost the same meaning.

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## 11. VEDĀRAMBHA SANSKĀR

The *Vedārambha* Sanskār is the ritual of commencing the study of the Vedas right from the recitation of the Gāyatrī mantra up to the study of the four Vedas or all kinds of true knowledge, and the conduct of celibacy. The child becomes a *dvija* (द्विज) only after *Upanayana* and *Vedārambha* Sanskārs. *Dvija* means the one who takes a second birth. The first birth is the biological one, and the second birth is achieved through learning. It has been said: *Janmanā jāyate śūdraḥ sanskārād dvija ucyate*[64] – all are born Shudras, and a person becomes a *dvija* only through the Sanskārs.

The Vedas are the encyclopaedia of all true knowledge. So, the *Brahmachārī* is taught the Vedic hymns. The Acharya gives his discourse to the *Brahmachārī* about the Gāyatrī (गायत्री) hymn.[65] Being the first hymn of the Acharya's discourse, it is also called the *Guru mantra.* The Gāyatrī mantra extols the meditation and retentivity of the superlative, and the purest form of God. It says that may God, the almighty, inspire our intellect towards noble virtues, actions and pious nature to attain the right path of life.[66]

The concept of *Vedārambha* Sanskār entails the stay of the *Brahmachārī* in the company of Acharya for the total period of study. Swamiji does not agree with the idea that the student should study in a school for some hours and then come back to his parents daily. Under the supervision of the ascetic and detached Acharya, the whole time care and development of the *Brahmachārī* is ensured.

### *Duties of the Brahmachārī*

The most important aspect of the *Vedārambha* Sanskār, which reflects the unique vision of Rishi Dayanand regarding education, is summed up in the duties of the *Brahmachārī.* The Sanskārvidhi specifies twenty-two rules, of which seventeen have been mentioned by the ancient Acharyas, and five have been added by Rishi Dayanand. These duties are aimed at keeping the *Brahmachārī* away from vices and misconduct.

The do's and don'ts proposed by the ancient Acharyas are as follows:

The Brahmachārī is required to (i) observe celibacy from the very first day in the Gurukula, (ii) use pure water, (iii) act righteously, (iv) shun eight kinds of sexual acts, (v) study the Veda with all its related parts living under the command of the Acharya, (vi) observe self-discipline (vii) follow only dharma and not the adharma of the Acharya, (viii) shun anger and falsehood (ix) shun excessive bathing, meals, long periods of sleep or wakefulness, lust, attraction, fear and sorrow. (x) put on a waist-band, carry a stick, seek alms for meals, offer oblations to fire, take baths, do *Sandhyā* and meditation, offer salutation to the Acharya every morning and evening and observe good behaviour towards him.

The *Brahmachārī* is not to (xi) take part in dance, singing, playing upon a musical instrument or make use of perfume and collyrium (अंजन), (xii) sleep on a cot etc., (xiii) sleep during the day, (xiv) shave, (xv) eat meat, drink and take arid food, (xvi) ride an ox, horse, elephant, camel etc., and (xvii) live in a village, wear shoes or use an umbrella.[67]

In this context, Swamiji has made provision for the following five duties:

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i. To wake up daily in the last part of night, perform routine acts, brush teeth, take bath, and perform *sandhyopāsanā, īśvarastutiprārthanā* and *yogābhyāsa.*
ii. Not to touch the sex organ except when urinating. To protect semen and become *ūrdhvaretā.*
iii. Not to use oil or unguent (उबटन). Not to eat items that are very sour like tamarind fruit इमली etc., very acrid like red pepper, astringent like (हरड़), brackish, salty and purgative (रेचक) like variopha cureas (जमालगोटा) etc.
iv. To aid the efforts towards education by taking proper meals.
v. To possess virtues: enabling the *Brahmachārī* to know taking a proper seat in an assembly. To be affable, to be of good conduct and to be moderate in speech.[68]

In the *Vedārambha* Sanskār, Swamiji has culled thoughts from the treatises of Ayurveda like *Suśruta*, Manusmriti, Taittirīyopaniṣad etc., and has given their meanings, besides setting the norms to be observed concerning celibacy and good conduct.

## 12. SAMĀVARTANA SANSKĀR

Having attained complete knowledge with all the parts and sub-parts of the Vedas, the best education and the knowledge of material science (पदार्थ विज्ञान), returning home from the gurukula, in order to get married and to attain *Gṛhsthāshrama*, the life of a householder, is called the *Samāvartana* Sanskār.

*Taittirīyopaniṣad* speaks of the character that a student should develop in an educational institution and of his later conduct in the society.[69] While entering the gurukula, the father advises his child to be in proper unison with the institute of learning; and upon the completion of studies, he is advised by the Acharya about the behaviour expected of him in the society. As the advice of the father to the child to comprehend the depth of *Vedārambha* Sanskār is of great importance, in the same way, the advice of the Acharya to the snātak (the one bathed in knowledge, the graduate) to comprehend the depth of the *Samāvartana* Sanskār, at the time of departure from the Gurukula, is of immense significance. This discourse to be given by the Acharya at the *Samāvartana* Sanskār is not mentioned in the Sanskārvidhi. It is written in the third chapter of Satyarth Prakash with proper evidence and meaning.

## 13. VIVĀHA SANSKĀR

The *Vivāha* Sanskār relates to the marriage ceremony. A man and a woman, with compatible qualities, having completed the period of continence, and having attained education and strength, join together in a bond of love to produce good progeny.[70] A girl who is not related within six generations on the mother's side and who does not belong to the *gotra* (family) of the father is eligible for marriage.[71]

Swami Dayanand was firmly against child marriage and old age marriage.[72] He rejected the contention of *Parāśara Smriti* and *Śīghra-bodha* that if a girl is not married before she becomes *rajasvalā* (i.e., till the tenth year), her father, mother and elder brother, shall go to hell. Swamiji did not agree with the opinion that the girl termed

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*Gaurī* (age 8 years) *Rohiṇī* (age 9 years) *Kanyā* (age 10 years) should be married at such a young age.

Swamiji considered the custom of matching the *lagna* i.e., date and stars etc., as preposterous. He held that such fanciful considerations have no evidence from the *Ārṣa grantha.*[73] In this context, Swamiji has given extracts from Āśvalāyana and Gobhila Gṛhyasūtras.[74]

On the basis of Manusmriti, Swamiji has considered eight kinds of marriage: *Brāhma, Daiva, Ārṣa, Prājāpatya, Āsura, Gāndharva, Rākṣasa* and *Paiśācha.* Of these, the first four types of marriage are good and the last four are abominable in gradual sequence. On the authority of Yāska,[75] he considers the nearness of place in conjugal relations as improper.

Swamiji laid down the principle that marriage should be based on *guṇa* (virtue), *karma* (activity) and *svabhāva* (nature) and not on caste by birth. Swamiji suggests that for a judicious match, there should be a pre-investigation, after which the would-be couple should meet in the company of scholars and men and women of repute. In that meeting, proper conference should be held. In support of his view, he has given an evidence from *Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra.*[76]

## 14. VĀNAPRASTHA SANSKĀR

The householder, after the age of fifty, with an aging body and grey hair, and having got grandchildren should go in for *Vānaprastha.*[77] In this stage, one spends a life of asceticism and self-study in the jungle or in isolation taking the consecration (दीक्षा) of *Vānaprastha Āshrama* through the *Vānaprastha* Sanskār.

***Spiritual Life enriched with Asceticism and Self-study***

In Vedic culture, the human life strikes a balance between relishing (भोग) and renunciation (त्याग), with a combination that is like the coming together of a jewel and gold in an ornament – *maṇikāncana sanyoga* (मणिकांचन संयोग). That is why we have *puruṣārthacatuṣṭya* (पुरुषार्थचतुष्ट्य) or the four goals of *dharma, artha, kāma* and *mokṣa.* In *artha* and *kāma,* there is the predominance of *bhoga* or relish, while in *dharma* and *mokṣa* there is the predominance of renunciation. That is to say that we have a wonderful balance between spirituality and materialism. With this vision of one's life, we have to look at these sixteen rituals and follow the *Āshramas.* In *Brahmacarya, Vānaprastha* and *Sannyāsa,* there is a predominance of spiritualism, renunciation and *vairāgya.* No doubt, materialistic consumerism prevails in *Gṛhastha Āshrama,* but that too is controlled by *Dharma.* In the *Vānaprastha Āshrama,* there is the prevalence of asceticism, renunciation and spiritualism with self-study.

In ancient times, the Brāhmaṇ Vānaprasthīs, in particular, volunteered to run Gurukulas with the help of society, providing free education and helping the state achieve the important goal of compulsory education for all.

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## 15. SANNYĀSA ĀSHRAMA

Swamiji has incorporated Sanskārs for entry to *Vānaprastha* and *Sannyāsa* on the basis of Veda Samhitās, Brāhmaṇa treatises, Dharmasūtras, Upaniṣads and Manusmriti. In the sixth chapter of Manusmriti, there is a provision for *Vānaprastha* and *Sannyāsa Āshramas* with a mention of their duties.

In relation to the time of the *Sannyāsa Āshrama*, Swamiji has given three options:

i. *Brahmacharya* is followed by *Gṛhastha Āshrama*, which is succeeded by *Vānaprastha*. After *Vānaprastha*, to get full renunciation from the world, one enters the *Sannyāsa Āshrama* i.e., after the earlier three *Āshramas* successively, at the age of 75 years.[78]

ii. If renunciation is achieved, one may enter into *Sannyāsa* straight from *Gṛhastha* even without getting into *Vānaprastha*, because total renunciation and true knowledge are the touch-stones of *Sannyāsa Āshrama*.

iii. If there is complete celibacy, true renunciation and attainment of all knowledge and no attachment with the worldly objects, one who possesses enough self-control for life-long *Sannyāsa* Dharma, without getting into *Gṛhastha* and *Vānaprastha*, may directly adopt the *Sannyāsa Āshrama* after completing the *Brahmacharya Āshram*.[79]

*Brahmachārīs* attain knowledge, *Gṛhasthas* accomplish the household duties and *Vānaprasthīs* engage themselves deeply in penance, so for enhancement of dharma and Vidyā, none other than the *Sannyāsi*, gets time. The need of the *Sannyāsa Āshrama* in respect of other *Āshramas* is like the need of the head for the body, because without it, there cannot be the enhancement of dharma and Vidyā (knowledge).

The main duty of a Sannyāsi is to speak the truth and to work for the benefit of others. If one gets into *Sannyāsa*, devoid of renunciation and without complete knowledge and faith in dharma and God, one cannot be beneficial to the society. It is difficult for people in the other *Āshramas* to act without fear and favour. A Sannyāsī is free from all social bonds, and there is none more beneficial for the society than him. Moreover, the Sannyāsī gets maximum time to work for the progress of science of all objects with true knowledge.[80]

According to Manu,

*Sanmānādbrāhmaṇo nityamudvijeta viṣādiva. amṛtasyeva cākāṅkṣedavamānasya sarvadā.*[81]

*Yamānseveta satataṁ na nityaṁ niyamānbudhaḥ.*
*yamānpatatyakurvāṇo niyamānkevalānbhajan.*[82]

It means that a Sannyāsi should be afraid of the worldly respect treating it like poison and be desirous of the disrespect like nectar as the man who fears disrespect and desires respect becoming fond of praise falls from his position becoming deceptive and a liar. Therefore, be there disrespect or respect, be there aggrandisement or insult, be there life or death, be there profit or loss, be there love or the enmity of others, be there food, water, cloth, good residence available or not, be the weather cold or hot etc., he should bear it all and should always be firm in refuting *Adharma* and proving *Dharma*. He should never accept anything as excellent *dharma*, except these duties.

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He should not consider any other duty more important than his own. He should not worship any other than God. He should not consider anything right which is against the Vedas. He should not, in the place of God, consider – any objects *sukṣma* (सूक्ष्म), subtle; *sthūla* (स्थूल), gross; *jaḍa* (जड़), inert; or *jīva* (जीव), the individual soul. He should always consider God as his lord. He should think of himself as His servant. He should advise others accordingly. With any act by which a Gṛhastha gets progress and by which there is an increase of love instead of hatred among mother, father, son, wife, husband, relative, sister, friend, neighbour, servant, great or small, he should advise that (and only that).[83]

## 16. ANTYEṢṬI SANSKĀR

*Antyeṣṭi* Sanskār (funeral rite) is also called *Naramedha, Puruṣamedha, Narayāga* and *Puruṣayāga.*[84] Swamiji, considered *Antyeṣṭi* as a Sanskār in Sanskārvidhi on two strong pieces of evidence – one from Yajurveda[85] and the other from Manusmriti.[86] Importantly, after *Antyeṣṭi,* no rite is to be performed for the dead. Swamiji denounced the anti-Veda rituals like दशरात्र, एकादशाह, द्वादशाह, सपिण्डी कर्म, monthly and yearly *Gayā Śrāddha* etc.

For the last rites, Swamiji has extracted – 121 hymns in all – 5 hymns from Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra, the next 17 hymns from the Ṛgveda, followed by 63 hymns from the Yajurveda, 10 hymns from the Atharvaveda and last 26 hymns from Taittirīya Āraṇyaka, with the recitation of which the oblations are offered. Dr. Satyavrat Siddhantalankar is of the opinion that the hymns chosen by Swami Dayanand, reiterate time and again, the fact that the *jīva* gets next birth after leaving the previous body, according to his deeds (*karmas*). Great scholarship and foresight is reflected in the selection of these hymns by Swami Dayanand.[87]

If four people offer oblations with these hymns, the oblations so offered become 484 in number. If the *ghrita* remains, then the oblations should be continued till the body is reduced to ashes.[88]

When the dead body is reduced to ashes, all those present should wash their clothes and take bath. The house, where the death occurred, should be washed with water etc., and then the hymns of *Īśvarastutiprārthanopāsanā* (ईश्वरस्तुतिप्रार्थनोपासना) the *Svasti-vācana* and the *Śāntikaraṇa* should be recited and oblations given. The oblations with the ghee mixed with odorous substances help in removing any foul smell, and in purifying the air, making the heart peaceful.

On the third day after the funeral, any person related to the dead, should go and place the ashes at a separate place in the cremation ground. There is no other act which remains to be performed after the collection of the ashes. Swamiji has suggested that "If the person is rich then he, during his life time, or his relatives, after his death, should donate as much amount as they desire for the teaching of *Veda-vidyā*, the propagation of *dharma* as enunciated by Veda, or for bringing up the orphans, and such acts are highly appreciable."[89]

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Some important points regarding Rishi Dayanand's contribution to the understanding and system of Sanskārs, may be summarised as follows:

- Sanskārvidhi written by Swami Dayanand Saraswati is full of evidence from the four Vedas, the Brāhmaṇs, Āraṇyakas, Upaniṣadas, Gṛhyasūtras and Manusmriti.
- Every *Gṛhyasūtra* is related to some Veda or the other. Swamiji has made use of the chief *Gṛhyasūtras* related to the Vedas. These are: Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra of the Ṛgveda, Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra of the Yajurveda, Gobhila Gṛhyasūtra of the Sāmaveda and Śaunaka Gṛhyasūtra of the Atharvaveda. As a result, this book has become invaluable to all those who perform the Sanskārs ceremonies according to the *Gṛhyasūtras* of the four Vedas.
- Some *Gṛhyasūtras*, make the provision for eating meat in some of the Sanskārs, especially in the formation of *madhuparka* and in *annaprāśana*. Swami Dayanand considers all this to be the interpolations of the medieval period. He has given no place to meat, fish and wine in any form in his Sanskārvidhi.
- The *Gṛhyasūtras* do not consider the Shudras capable of performing the Sanskāras. Swamiji declares that anyone with devotion and dedication can perform the Sanskārs. According to Swamiji, whoever performs Sanskārs is a *dvija* and the determination of the *dvijatva* (द्विजत्व) is based upon the qualities (*guna*), actions (*karma*) and nature (*svabhāva*) of a person, and not on birth.
- Several *Gṛhyasūtras* hold that many of the rituals are not to be performed by a woman or a girl, or that she may perform them without uttering the hymns. Swamiji has vehemently condemned it and has advocated all rituals and ceremonies for all men and women without any discrimination or restriction.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES


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2. *Ibid.*, p. 589.
3. Dayanand Saraswati, *Sanskārvidhi* (ed. Yudhisthira Mimamsaka, 1974), Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Sonepat, verse 2, p. 5 and p. 40.
4. *Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra*, 3.8, *Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra*, 4.9
5. *Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra*, 3.3, *Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra*, 2.4, *Śānkhāyana Jaiminiya Gṛhyasūtra*, 2.3
6. *Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra*, 3.12
7. *Ibid.*, 3.7
8. *Kauśikasūtra, Kāṇḍa* 36.
9. *Mīmānsā Bhāshya*, 1.3.5; आचान्तेन कर्म कर्तव्यम्
10. *Nityakarm-Pūjā Prakāsh*, 2013 Vikrami, Gita Press, Gorakhpur, p. 18; ओं केशवाय नमः। ओं नारायणाय नमः। ओं माधवाय नमः।
11. *Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra*, 1.24.12, 21, 22; ओम् अमृतोपस्तरणमसि स्वाहा। ओम् अमृतापिधानमसि स्वाहा। ओम् सत्यं यशः श्रीर्मयि श्रीः श्रयताम् स्वाहा।
12. *Atharvaveda*, 3.27.1-6; ओम् प्राची दिगग्नि...
13. Swami Dayanand, *The Sanskārvidhi* (English translation by Acharya Vaidyanath Shastri, 1976), Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, New Delhi, p. 50.


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14. *Manusmriti*, III, 45-50.
15. Swami Dayanand, *op. cit.*, p. 57.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 54.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 57, also see *Sanskārvidhi*, English Tr. by Vaidyanath, footnote on pp. 68-69.
18. *Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra*, 1.14.1-2; अथ पुंसवनम् पुरा स्पन्दत इति मासे द्वितीये तृतीये वा।
19. *Āshvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra*, 1.13.6-7
20. पुमान् प्रसूयते येन कर्मणा तत्पुंसवनमीरितम् Śaunaka, *Viramitrodaya Sanskāra-prakāsh*, part I, p. 166.
21. Swami Dayanand, *op. cit.*, p. 58.
22. *Sāmaveda*, 1.8.8,9; *Atharvaveda*, 6.11.1-3.
23. Swami Dayanand, *op. cit.*, p. 58.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
25. Dayanand Saraswati, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-67.
26. सीमन्त उन्नीयते यस्मिन् कर्मणि तत् सीमन्तोन्नयनमिति कर्मनामधेयम् *Viramitrodaya Sanskār-prakāsh* – I, p. 172.
27. Dayanand Saraswati, *Sanskārvidhi*, p. 62.
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 62-67.
29. *Suśruta Śarīra Sthāna*, 3.51
30. *Manusmriti*, 9.9
31. *Suśruta*, 3.15
32. Dayanand Saraswati, *Sanskārvidhi*, pp. 70-71.
33. विदन्ति जानन्ति, विद्यन्ते भवन्ति, विन्दन्ति विन्दन्ते, लभन्ते, विन्दते विचारयन्ति सर्वे मनुष्याः सर्वाः सत्यविद्या यैर्येषु वा तथा विद्वांसश्च भवन्ति ते 'वेदाः'। Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Vedotpatti Viṣaya*, p. 20.
34. Bhimasen Sharma, Atmaram Amritsari, *Sanskār Chandrikā*, p. 292.
35. Dayanand Saraswati, *Sanskārvidhi*, p. 74.
36. *Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra* 1.15.7, द्व्यक्षरं प्रतिष्ठाकामश्चतुरक्षरं ब्रह्मवर्चसकामः।
37. *Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra* 1.18.5-6, सुदिनत्वमह्नामिति सव्ये, स्त्रियै तु मूर्धानमेवावजिघ्रति तूष्णीम्।
    *Gobhila Gṛhyasūtra* 2.8.25, स्त्रियास्तूष्णीं मूर्धन्यभिजिघ्रणं मूर्धन्यभिजिघ्रणम्
    In the right or left ear अस्मे प्रयन्धि etc. hymns should be recited and then his wife who is sitting on his left side, should also be touched at her head: *Sanskārvidhi*: p. 84.
38. Dayanand Saraswati, *Sanskārvidhi*, p. 86.
39. *Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra*, 1.15.4–5.
40. Dayanand Saraswati, *Sanskārvidhi*, pp. 87-88.
41. *Yajurveda*, 11.83, ओं अन्नपतेऽन्नस्य नो देह्यनमीवस्य शुष्मिणः। प्रप्र दातारं तारिषऽऊर्ज्जं नो धेहि द्विपदे चतुष्पदे।।
42. Dayanand Saraswati, *Sanskārvidhi*, p. 89.
43. *Suśruta. Śarīrasthāna*, 6.83, मस्तकाभ्यन्तरोपरिष्यत् शिरासम्बन्धिसन्निपातो रोमावर्तोऽपि पतिस्तत्रादि सद्यो मरणम्।
44. Raj Bali Pandeya, 1995, *Hindu Sanskār*, Chowkhambha Vidya Bhawan, Varanasi, p. 128.
45. Then taking a comb, collect the hair dressing them up. *Sanskārvidhi*, p. 90.
46. *Mantra Brāhmaṇa*, 1.6.5. *Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra*, 1.17.2. *Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra* also.
47. Dayanand Saraswati, *Sanskārvidhi*, p. 90.
48. *Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra*, 2.1.21, अनुगुप्तमेतं सकेशं गोमयपिण्डं निधाय गोष्ठे पल्वल उदकान्ते वा....
49. Dayanand Saraswati, *Sanskārvidhi*, p. 94; Swamiji was much ahead of his times. The practice that he suggested to dispose of the hairs was a mechanism to overcome the pollution of water bodies (rivers, streams)- Editor.
50. (a) Dayanand Saraswati, *Sanskārvidhi*, p. 95.
    (b) *Kātyāyana Gṛhyasūtra*, 1.2.
51. *Suṣruta: Sūtrasthāna*, 16.1, षष्ठे मासि सप्तमे वा शुक्लपक्षे प्रशस्तेषु तिथि–करण–मुहूर्त–नक्षत्रेषु
52. *Kātyāyana Gṛhyasūtra*, 1.2, अथ कर्णवेधो वर्षे तृतीये पंचमे वा

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53. Dayanand Saraswati, *Sanskārvidhi*, p. 96.
54. *Susṛuta Sūtrasthāna*, 26.1, रक्षाभूषणनिमित्तं बालस्य कर्णौ विध्येते
55. *Ibid.*, 16.91, 19.21
56. *Susṛuta*, 19.21, विध्येदन्त्रवृद्धिनिवृत्तये
57. *Ṛgveda*, 1.122.14, हिरण्यकर्णमणिग्रीवमर्णस्तन्नो विश्वे....
58. *Manu*, 4.36, शुभे रौक्मे च कुण्डले।।
59. *Taittirīya Samhitā*, 6.3.10, जायमानो वै ब्राह्मणस्त्रिभिर्ऋणवां जायते। ब्रह्मचर्येण ऋषिभ्यो यज्ञेन देवेभ्यः प्रजया पितृभ्यः
60. Gopinath, Sanskār Ratanmālā, p. 165; पुरा कल्पे हि नारीणां मौञ्जीबन्धनमिष्यते। अध्यापनं च वेदानां सावित्रीवाचनं तथा।
61. *Atharvaveda*, 11.5.18; ब्रह्मचर्येण कन्या युवानं विन्दते पतिम्।
62. इमं मन्त्रं पत्नी पठेत्, cf. पत्नीं वाचयति मेध्यामेवैनां करोति पत्यै प्रदाय वाचयेद् धोताऽध्वयुर्वा वेदोऽसि वित्तिरसि। (Āśvalāyana Śrautsutra, 1.11) ज्ञाते च वाचनं नह्यविद्वान् विहितोऽस्ति। (Taitīriya Brāhmaṇa, 1.6.5.6)
63. Ganga Prasad, 1941, *Fountain Head of Religion*, Pandit K. Jnani, Arya Samaj, Madras, p. 87.
64. *Skanda purāṇa: Nagara Khaṇḍa*, chapter 230 shloka 31; जन्मना जायते शूद्रः संस्काराद् द्विज उच्यते
65. *Ṛgveda*, 3.62.10. *Sāmaveda Uttararchikā*, 13.4, *Yajurveda*, 3.35, 22.9, 30.2, 36.3, ओं भूर्भुवः स्वः। तत्सवितुर्वरेण्यं भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि। धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात्।।
66. For more details see Dayanand Saraswati, *Sanskārvidhi*, pp. 110-111.
67. *Ibid.*, pp. 112-115.
68. *Ibid.*, pp. 112-113.
69. *Taittirīyopaniṣad*, 1.11.1-4
70. Swami Dayanand, *The Sanskārvidhi* (English Tr. by Acharya Vaidyanath Shastri), p. 173.
71. Swami Dayanand, *Satyarth Prakash*, English Tr. Dr. Chiranjiva Bharadwaja, p. 86.
72. Swamiji has quoted *Vedamantras* in support of his view point. See *Ṛgveda*, 2.35.4, 2.35.6, 5.37.33, 5.41.7.
73. Dayanand Saraswati, *Sanskārvidhi*, pp. 141.
74. *Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra*, 1.4.1-2, *Gobhila Gṛhyasūtra*, 2.1.1-2.
75. *Nirukta*, 3.4, दुहिता दुर्हिता दूरे हिता भवतीति
76. *Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra*, 1.5.5.
77. *Manu.*, 6.2
78. (a) Dayanand Saraswati, *Sanskārvidhi*, p. 276.
    (b) *Jabalopaniṣad*, *Khanda* 4, ब्रह्मचर्याश्रमं समाप्य गृही भवेत्, गृही भूत्वा वनी भवेत् वनी भूत्वा प्रव्रजेत्
79. Dayanand Saraswati, *Sanskārvidhi*, pp. 276-277.
80. Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash*, a brief gist of fifth chapter.
81. *Manusmriti*, 2.162; संमानाद्ब्राह्मणो नित्यमुद्विजेत विषादिव। अमृतस्येव चाकाङ्क्षेदवमानस्य सर्वदा।।
82. *Ibid.*, 4.204; यमान्सेवेत सततं न नित्यं नियमान्बुधः। यमान्पतत्यकुर्वाणो नियमान्केवलान्भजन्।।
83. (a) Dayanand Saraswati, *Sanskārvidhi*, pp. 306-308.
    (b) *Manusmriti*, 2.162, 4.204.
84. Dayanand Saraswati, *Sanskārvidhi*, English translation Acharya Vaidyanath Shastri, Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, New Delhi, pp. 339-340.
85. *Yajurveda*, 40.15, भस्मान्तं शरीरम्
86. *Manu* 2.16, निषेकादिश्मशानान्तो मन्त्रैर्यस्योदितो विधिः
87. Satyavrat Siddhantalankar, *Sanskār Chandrikā*, p. 497.
88. Dayanand Saraswati, *Sanskārvidhi*, p. 311.
89. *Ibid.*, pp. 309-321.

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CHAPTER 44

# Patañjali's Aṣṭāṅga Yoga: A Sublime Way of Life

*Balvir Acharya*

Yoga is control of the fluctuations of the mind, the establishment of the *jīvātmā* (human soul) in its own self, leading to the realisation of the Divine Supreme Spirit of the universe i.e., *Paramātmā* or God.[1] In *Kaṭhopaniṣad,* it is said, that when the senses, mind (*mana*), and intelligence (*buddhi*), i.e., all organs of experience are completely stilled, inversed and vested in the *ātmā* at total peace, that is the state of yoga.[2] The Gītā says that the state of yoga is not only the total peace and stillness of mind, sense and intelligence, it is also the reflection of that state of poise in action, the performance of *dharmic* duty for its own sake in God's dispensation with expertise and balance of mind, without the expectation of its worldly reward.[3]

There are two objectives of yoga – *Pāramārthic* and *Vyāvahārik.* Spiritual or *Pāramārthic* is control of the senses and of the mind, realisation of the self and God, and rising of the individual *ātman* to the state of *mokṣa,* the ultimate freedom from existential bondage. This is the progress from existence to the Essence, the ascent of the finite to the state of Samādhi. Practical or *Vyāvahārik* is the performance of duty in the state of active living for the sake of action, beyond all considerations of reward or retribution, loss or gain, praise or blame. This is freedom too, in the sense of action for union with the Divine, with complete faith in the Law of the Divine.

## THE SEVEN SCHOOLS OF YOGA

In the Indian tradition of yoga, there are seven schools: 1. *Sāmkhya* yoga or the yoga of knowledge (*Jñāna* yoga), 2. *Karma* yoga or the yoga of action, 3. *Bhakti* yoga or the yoga of devotion to God, 4. *Mantra* yoga, 5. *Laya* yoga, 6. *Haṭha* yoga, and 7. *Rāja* yoga or *Aṣṭāṅga* yoga, the eightfold yoga of Patañjali as expounded in the *yogasūtras.*

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Swami Dayanand follows and prescribes *Aṣṭāṅga* yoga in his Satyarth Prakash and Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā on the basis of the Vedas, especially Yajurveda, chapter 11.

A brief description of the different schools is as follows:

***(1) Sāmkhya or Jñāna Yoga***

The first exponent of *Sāmkhya* yoga in the Vedic tradition was Maharshi Kapila, author of the *Sāmkhya sūtras*. The basis of this school of yoga is man's discriminative knowledge (*viveka*) of *prakṛti* (nature and its mutations in the world of change), and of *puruṣa* (the individual soul, *jīvātmā*, and the cosmic soul, *Paramātmā*). When one realises through knowledge and experience (vision) of *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*, the difference between the world of change and the state of permanence, then one rises to the state of freedom beyond all change and the consequent suffering.

The soul is free in essence and suffering is caused by its involvement in change – loss and gain, in the state of nature. *Prakṛti* is the original material cause of various evolutes: *ahaṅkāra* (individuation), *mana* (mind), *buddhi* (intelligence), organs of perception, organs of volition and action, the subtle elements (sound, touch, form, taste, smell), and the gross elements (space, air, fire, water, earth). The *Sāmkhya* philosophy says that when *ātmā* gets discriminative knowledge of all these, and realises that all changes take place only in *prakṛti* and not in the *puruṣa* (the individual *ātmā* as well as the cosmic *Ātmā*), then free of the suffering caused by change, it gets freedom of the ultimate order (*mokṣa*).

Discriminative knowledge is *viveka*, and its opposite is *avidyā* (ignorance). *Avidyā* is the cause of suffering and bondage. Lord Krishna says in the *Gītā*: "O Arjuna, just as blazing fire reduces the fuel to ash, similarly knowledge (*jñāna*) burns off all *karmas* and their consequence."[4] He also says: "There is nothing so sacred here in the world as discriminative knowledge, and that the yogi, tempered and perfected in yoga attains by himself in due course of time."[5] This is *Jñāna* yoga.

***(2) Karma Yoga***

To do one's duty (*karma*) without the temptation of or desire for any worldly gain, to act according to the injunctions of God's will, with surrender to God and not as a proud doer – this indeed is the real and wondrous form of *karma yoga* – the *Niṣkāma Karmayoga*. By accepting the path of *Niṣkāma Karmayoga*, one rises above the problems and sufferance of fear, anxiety, pleasure or pain. This is the essence of the Gītā:

"You have a right to action, not to the fruit thereof."

It would be a misinterpretation of *Karma yoga* to think that one should not do any *karma* at all. *Karma yoga* is based on the philosophy of cause and consequence. The fruit of *karma* follows definitely according to the law of Nature. When the doer concentrates on *karma-phal*, the fruit of *karma*, his actions are likely to be vitiated in character possibly by unholy means. Moreover, the will, energy and effort which should be focused on the quality of *karma* might be wasted on the anxiety and fear of the result. If the quality of action is compromised, then the fruit itself would be impoverished. Therefore, the message is: You can and must do your best, but do not waste your energy on anything

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other than doing. Not for any reason, slacken in your performance. Have no worry, and concentrate on *karma.*[6]

"Arjuna, be firm in the state of yoga. In the state of *karma yoga,* without attachment to consideration of the result, do the duty. With equanimity in the possibilities of success or no-success, do your duty. Yoga is equanimity."[7]

"Yoga means efficiency and expertise of the performance of duty."[8]

"Yoga is equanimity - equanimity, of soul."[9]

***(3) Bhakti Yoga***

Giving up all material desires, with complete surrender to God, to celebrate, sing and pray to God, to meditate on the Divine presence, to love God with mind, in action and speech, in a state of love and piety – to do all one's duty: this is *Bhaktiyoga.*

***(4) Mantra Yoga***

To chant God's essential name-word Aum (Om), or to chant the Gāyatrī mantra, and to stabilise oneself in that chant – that is *Mantra yoga.* This is also called *jāpa* yoga. *Jāpa* is of four types: *Vāchikā* or articulate jāpa, *Upānśu* or quiet jāpa, *Mānasikā* or mental jāpa, and *Ajāpajāpa* or silent jāpa. When one chants the name-word of God, it is 'articulate jāpa'; when the jāpa is heard by none other than the doer, it is 'upānśu jāpa'; when no speech organ is in operation during the chant, it is 'mental jāpa' and when the chant continues on its own inside a person, it is 'jāpa without jāpa'.

***(5) Laya Yoga***

When the yogi is completely immersed in *Dhyāna* (meditation), it is the state of '*laya yoga*'. It can also be achieved in other states like walking, sitting, standing, if the entire consciousness is concentrated on God. When the yogi 'hears' the sound of Om reverberating all round, and his mind is completely merged with the sound (*Nāda*), that too, is *laya yoga.*

***(6) Haṭha Yoga***

Haṭha Yoga is called *Kuṇḍalinīyoga.* The term *haṭha* consists of '*ha*' and '*ṭha*'. *Ha* means the '*sūrya svara*', breath through the right nostril. *Ṭha* means '*chandra svara*', breath through the left nostril. 'Sūrya' means 'the sun' and 'Chandra' means 'the moon'. To enjoin these breaths and make them flow into the central nerve, '*Suṣumṇā nādī*', is *haṭha yoga.* The primary emphasis is on *āsana* (posture), *prāṇāyāma, mudrā* (finger position with mystical meaning), *nāda* (the cosmic sound of Om), and *kriyā* (particular exercise). *Haṭhayoga* and *Rājayoga* are said to be complementary.[10]

***(7) Rājayoga or Aṣṭāṅga Yoga***

This yoga is called *Rājayoga* as it is the dominant yoga. In fact, the other forms of *yoga* can be subsumed in the *Rājayoga.* It is also called '*Samādhiyoga*'. To realise the self and also to realise the presence of God in the state of *Samādhi,* and to attain the state of *mokṣa,* is the aim of *Rājayoga.* Patañjali has detailed the process in the *Yogasūtras.*

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## ASHṬĀṄGA OR THE EIGHTFOLD YOGA

The eight limbs of *Aṣṭāṅgayoga* are:[11] (i) *Yama*, (ii) *Niyama*, (iii) *Āsana*, (iv) *Prāṇāyāma*, (v) *Pratyāhāra*, (vi) *Dhāraṇā*, (vii) *Dhyāna*, and (viii) *Samādhi*.

The first five of these are called *Bahiraṅga* (external) yoga, and the other three are called *Antaraṅga* (internal) yoga. Swami Dayanand says that these eight steps of yoga are the steps to *mokṣa*, the spiritual freedom from suffering.[12]

## THE EXTERNAL MEANS (SĀDHANĀS) OF YOGA

### 1. YAMA

*Yamas*[13] are the values of social ethics, and are five in number: *Ahinsā* (love, non-violence), *satya* (truth), *asteya* (non-stealing), *brahmacharya* (sexual discipline), and *aparigraha* (non-hoarding, frugality).

***(i) Ahinsā (Love, Non-violence)***

*Ahinsā*, usually understood only as physical non-violence, has a much wider and deeper meaning. It consists in not inflicting any mental or physical pain or injury to any living being through thought, word or deed.

The *Yoga sūtras* mention eighty-one forms of violence. Its three main categories are – (i) *krit* (done directly), (ii) *kārit* (caused, or done through another), and (iii) *anumodit* (approved or affirmed). Each of these has three categories based on the motivation – *lobh* (greed), *krodh* (anger), and *moh* (attachment). Further subdivisions are based on the magnitude of violence. Such elaborate thought underlines the importance that the Vedic culture and *Yoga sūtras* accord to *ahinsā*.[14]

*Hinsā* (violence) is caused by anger, fear, greed, infatuation, ignorance and weakness. Swami Dayanand cautions against mental violence too, which includes nursing anger and enmity or thinking ill of others. He also attaches a positive connotation to *ahinsā* as love for all living beings in every way at all times.[15] For a non-violent person, there is no anger, no jealousy, no dear, no enmity all round.[16] When a person is confirmed in love and non-violence, others too, learn by his example.[17]

***(ii) Satya (Truth)***

*Satya* means to accept, believe or describe a thing as it is. As you know something by direct experience and observation, so speak of it, follow it, believe it, and do it, says Swami Dayanand.[18]

One commits four kinds of sin with words: telling lies, unnecessary chatter, back-biting and scandal, and rough and hurtful language. One must avoid these. Think before you speak; be courteous, cultured, true, and socially true and helpful. The meaning and purpose of truth is the good of all. It has been advised that one should speak the truth, but in a language that does not hurt the listener. Social and notional good is also the end and aim of truth.[19] The reward of truth, according to Swami

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Dayanand is inevitable success in all good deeds. He says: When a person is sure of the truth, when he knows, believes, speaks, and follows the truth in his actions, conduct and behaviour, he is blessed with success in all that he ought and wants to do or does.[20]

***(iii) Asteya (Non-Stealing)***

*Asteya* means 'non-stealing' i.e., not to take away, by deceit or injustice, anything that belongs to others, without their agreement, will and permission.

Taking bribe, getting or earning money without hard and honest work, accepting salary without doing one's duty, to be careless in the performance of duty, to weigh less than the right quantity in a sale or to fix the price of goods higher than what is fair – all these are forms of theft in the business of daily life according to Patañjali and Dayanand. Yoga is thus a practical way of life and not just an intellectual exercise.

Swami Dayanand says that even the wish to take away the things that belong to others without their permission is a violation of *asteya*. In other words, *asteya* must be followed in action, intention and thought.[21] When a person, in thought, words and deed, is determined and confirmed in *asteya*, then all the precious jewels of life attend around him.[22]

***(iv) Brahmacharya (Sexual Restraint)***

Complete control of the sexual instinct is *brahmacharya*. Swami Dayanand states that, during one's student life, up to the minimum of twenty-five years of age, complete sensual and sexual control is extremely important and necessary. Premarital or extra-marital relations are out of question. Indulgence even during married life must be avoided. One must continue to observe and maintain the sanctity of one's person, family, community and society in the context of culture and *dharma*.[23]

The reward of *brahmacharya* is a strong, supple and handsome body, if one observes the discipline honestly, sincerely and conscientiously, in thought, word and deed. The intelligence becomes fine, subtle and alert, so that it is easy to comprehend the serious subjects of higher significance.[24]

Dayanand says that a person, who maintains *brahmacharya* in life, remains free of disease, depression and vitiation of body; mind and soul, realises the four great ideals of life which are *dharma, artha, kāma* and *mokṣa*, and always enjoys a state of bliss.[25,26]

***(v) Aparigraha (Non-hoarding, Frugality)***

Getting, collecting, hoarding, beyond need and measure, is *parigraha*. The opposite of it is frugality, prosperity and comfort as per one's need without the desire for excess or the fear of loss.

Maharshi Vyāsa, in his commentary on the *Yogasūtra* writes: "the collection of the insatiable, protection, preservation, loss, diminution, appetisers, violence, fearsome defectives – all these are negatives, therefore are un-acceptable for intelligent: the rejection of these is *aparigraha*."[27]

Swami Dayanand adds another dimension to *aparigraha*. He says that a person must be free of negative traits like pride. The proud is greedy, and greed is the negation

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of virtue. Therefore, *aparigraha* is freedom from pride[28] and freedom from greed.[29] In short, *aparigraha* means the rejection of unnecessary and harmful material and the rejection of negative, harmful thoughts, ideas and attitudes of the mind and morals.

Explaining the Yoga sūtra on *aparigraha,*[30] Swami Dayanand says that when a person is free of selfish drives, emotions, attitudes and material aspirations, and concentrates on the yogic well-being of life, he contemplates on and finds answers to questions related to the meaning and purpose of life, such as 'Who am I?' 'Where from, am I?' 'What should I do?' 'By doing what, shall I come to good?' Such questions, their answers, ideas and ideals are confirmed in his mind and culture.[31]

## 2. NIYAMA

The five *Niyamas*[32] are: *Śauca* (cleanliness and purity), *Santoṣa* (contentment), *Tapa* (austerity of discipline), *Svādhyāya* (self-study and the study of good literature), and *Īśvara-prānidhāna* (surrender to God). The observance of these niyamas is necessary for one's personal advancement and a good life.

### *(i) Śauca (Cleanliness and Purity)*

*Śauca* means to clean, to purify. Cleanliness is twofold: external and internal. External cleanliness includes cleanliness of the body, clothes, home and surroundings. Internal cleanliness means to purify the mind of all negativities and their causes – intellectual, moral, emotional and ideational such as jealousy, enmity, greed, infatuation, anger, selfishness of love and attachment.

Dayanand also says that purity is twofold: external and internal. One achieves external cleanliness through activities like bathing, washing, sifting, sieving, proper cooking of food and by *agnihotra* which purifies the environment. One achieves internal purity by *dhārmic* conduct like speaking the truth, self-study and study of good books, and the company of good, positive and *dhārmic* people in holy congregations.[33]

Maharshi Manu emphasises inner purity, saying that the body is cleansed with water; the mind is cleansed by speaking the truth; the *ātmā* (soul) is cleansed by knowledge and austerity of discipline; and *buddhi* (intelligence) is cleansed by knowledge and scientific and logical thinking.[34] Swami Dayanand stresses upon the same, saying that with water, the external parts of the personality are cleansed, but not the mind and the spirit. The mind is cleansed by faith in truth, and by truth in speech and action. The soul (*ātmā*) by knowledge, practice of yoga and *dhārmic* conduct, and the *buddhi* (intelligence) is cleansed by reason, rational thought and knowledge.[35]

Swami Dayanand says that by focussing on the cleanliness of one's *antaḥkaraṇa*, i.e., *mana*, (mind), *buddhi* (intelligence), *citta* (memory and ideas), and *ahaṅkāra* (sense of the self and spiritual identity) with the practice of yoga, the self is purified, leading to the experience of purity and joy, freedom from distractions of the senses and mind, attainment of mental concentration and the possibility of self-realisation purely in spiritual terms.[36]

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***(ii) Santoṣa (Contentment)***

*Santoṣa* means contentment. Swami Dayanand explains: If a person stays on by himself doing nothing – that is not *santoṣa.* To make optimum effort, but staying calm, without feeling too happy at success or depressed at failure – that is *santoṣa,* the equanimity of mind and spirit.[37] Sloth, of course, is non-contentment.[38] Maharshi Vyāsa concurs that contentment lies in moving on the right path, doing one's best with one's heart and the means at one's command, and expecting no more than what comes one's way.[39] Patañjali says:

"*Santoṣādanuttamaḥ sukhalābhaḥ*"[40]

Explaining the sūtra, Swami Dayanand says, that there is nothing better or higher than the joy that one gets from contentment.[41] By *santoṣa,* the yogi gets freedom from the ambition for what is not, and consequently attains freedom from suffering born of insatiable desire (*tṛṣṇā*). This is joy supreme.

Maharshi Vyāsa says that the joy people get from the fulfilment of cherished desire, and also the joy that is heavenly, together do not equal even the one-sixteenth of the joy, which the *yogi* experiences from the elimination of *tṛṣṇā.*[42]

***(iii) Tapa (Austerity of Discipline)***

According to Patañjali, *tapa* means performance of one's duties and while doing so, facing with equanimity, the contraries (*dvandva*) of pleasure versus pain, gain and loss, praise and insult, heat and cold.[43] This is the *sātvika* (best) form of *tapa.*

Gītā[44] describes three orders of *tapa*: mental tapa (*mānasic tapa*); verbal tapa (*vācika tapa*); physical tapa (*śārīrik tapa*). The mental *tapa* is keeping the mind peaceful and purifying it with positive ideas, pursuit of truth, freedom from double-speak and double-think, and purity and transparency of behaviour. The verbal *tapa* is to speak words which are true, sweet, encouraging, and bring peace; reading of good books and use of minimum words for maximum expression. The physical *tapa* is respect for and service of parents, respect for seniors, remaining clean, living in a simple, natural manner, and observing *ahiṅsā* and brahmacharya.

Doing mental, verbal and physical *tapa* to keep the mind and soul is *Sātvika tapa.* In sacred literature, *Sātvika tapa* is recommended, but the *Rājasika tapa* (of the middle order) *Tāmasika tapa* (of the lowest type) are prohibited. The *tapa* which is done to earn social recognition and enhance one's pride is *Rājasika tapa.* The *tapa* which subjects the body to strain and pain, and is performed with obstinate persistence, like sitting with fire all round, standing on one leg for a long time, keeping one or both arms up etc., is *Tāmasika tapa.* These are of no use.[45]

Swami Dayanand emphasises that only the *Sātvika tapa* should be undertaken, as to him, dharma is at the heart of *tapa.* He gives three versions of *tapa*:

1. Observance of dharma, i.e., justice and rectitude in an objective impersonal manner, coupled with *yogic* practice like *prāṇāyāma.*[46]
2. Even at the cost of unhappiness and suffering, the observance of *dharma* and performance of *dhārmic* work.[47]

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3. Just as the goldsmith purifies and refines gold in the heat of a furnace, the yogi should purify and refine his mind and soul (*mana* and *ātmā*) in the austere discipline of *tapa* through *dhārmic* conduct and inculcation of holy ideas and virtues of life.[48]

*Tapa* makes the body strong, and increases perception and volition.[49]

***(iv) Svādhyāya (Self-study and Study of Good Literature)***

According to Maharshi Vyāsa, *Svādhyāya* means the reading of sacred literature and chanting of Aum.[50] Maharshi Dayanand concurs: Reading of sacred literature on the subject of *mokṣa* such as the Vedas and the *Darśanas*, meditation on Aum and feeling the presence of God for one's own vision and experience – that is *Svādhyāya*.[51]

In the context of the subject at hand, the word *Svādhyāya* has two meanings. The first is *su+dhyāya*, i.e., reading of the best and holiest books which light up the path to *mokṣa*. Such are the Vedas, Vedāṅgas, Upāṅgas, Upavedas, Upaniṣads, Darśanas, Gītā, etc. The other meaning of Svādhyāya is *sva+adhyāya*, i.e., study and meditation of one's own self, that is, study of the *ātmas kośas*, namely, *annamaya kośa*, *prāṇamaya kośa*, *manomayā kośa*, *vijñānamaya kośa* and *ānandamaya kośa*; and after knowing of these planes of the personality, knowing of the subtle body (*sūkṣama śarīra*), followed by the pursuit of *ātma-sākṣātkāra* or self-realisation, leading finally, to the vision of the Divine.

The person dedicated to *Svādhyāya* is led on to the Divine vision (*Īśvara sākṣātkāra*). The person gets into the company of *yogis*, scholars of the Veda and saints. This helps him or her proceed to the divine goal.[52] Explaining Patañjali's '*Īṣṭa devatā samprayoga*', Swami Dayanand says that by *Svādhyāya*, the *yogi* gets close to the presence of the divine object of his holy pursuit, God and by virtue of divine grace, is led on the self-purification, self-visions, pursuit of truth, *puruṣārtha* (attainment of the meaning and purpose of life), Divine love and *mokṣa*, the ultimate freedom.[53]

***(v) Īśvara-prāṇidhāna (Surrender to God)***

Prayer, meditation and worship with devotion to the one God, complete renunciation of worldly desires with the aim of self-realisation (*ātma sākṣātkāra*) and through that, God realisation (*Īśvara-sākṣātkāra*), doing one's duty, and complete, unqualified, unreserved surrender to God is *Īśvara-prāṇidhāna*.[54]

Maharshi Dayanand explains that *Īśvara-prāṇidhāna* means the surrender with all faith and love, of all one's strength, powers and virtues, all qualities, all *prāṇas*, the *ātmā* and *mana* (self and mind), in short, the surrendered dedication of all that is yours in this phase of existence.[55] The devotee attains the state of Samādhi without difficulty.[56] Elsewhere it is said that, the devotee attains the direct realisation of God (*Īśvara sākṣātkāra*) and success over all obstacles to the top state of yoga.[57]

***The Importance of Yamas and Niyamas***

The observation of yamas is a ladder for the practitioner. The mind and the senses revert and get stabilised internally, detached from external temptations, and the consciousness concentrates on self-realisation.

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Maharshi Patañjali says that all *yamas* are universal, and are not bound by considerations of time, space or species. They are the basic mantras on the path of self-realisation. Therefore, they are called *mahāvrata,*[58] "the great Discipline."

Maharshi Manu says that for spiritual realisation, the observance of both *yamas* and *niyamas* is necessary and unavoidable:

*Yamānseveta satataṁ na nityaṁ niyamānbudhaḥ,*
*Yamānpatatyakurvāṇo niyamānkevalānbhajan.*[59]

The practitioner must observe the *yamas* without break, and not the *niyamas* only, intelligent as he/she is. The one who observes only the *niyamas* without observance of the *yamas*, falls off the path of yoga.[60]

The *yamas* are necessary, not only for personal good, but also for the social good, peace, progress and order. Without these, a society would fall, organisationally and morally, to evil and disorder. Corruption, bribery and disunity would follow inevitably.

## 3. ĀSANA

*Āsana* is that posture of the body, in which one can sit comfortably in meditation, with body, mind and *ātmā* in harmony.[61] According to Swami Dayanand *āsana* is the posture at ease, without any discomfort.[62]

In yogic practice, there are two kinds of *āsana*: one, for meditation; the other, for physical health. For meditation, those postures are advised in which one can sit for long with ease, comfort and harmony of the body, mind and soul. Such *āsanas* are *padmāsana, siddhāsana,* etc. The other kind of *āsanas* are for the sake of physical exercise. Such are *halāsana, śīrṣāsana,* and *sarvāṅgāsana,* etc. There are two ways of attaining success in *āsana* - one is *prayatna śaithilya,* no bodily strain, and slow, successive exercise for comfortable perfection of the posture; and the other is *ananta samāpatti,* complete concentration on the presence of God.[63]

*Yogasūtra* says that when success and efficiency in the *āsana* are attained, the yogi attains the strength and ability to remain calm and comfortable, maintain concentration, and be at peace, despite the contraries of weather such as heat and cold, and needs of the body such as hunger and thirst.[64] Maharshi Dayanand affirms the same and says that when the yogi is stabilised in the *āsana* posture, he does not have to strain his body or mind to sit at peace for meditation.[65]

## 4. PRĀṆĀYĀMA

After attaining stability in an *āsana,* controlling the movement of breath in that posture, is called *Prāṇāyāma.*[66] Maharshi Dayanand writes: The inhalation of breath is *śvāsa,* the exhalation of breath is *praśvāsa.* The yogi should control both by the act of thought, and never by holding the nose with one's hand. *Prāṇāyāma* is the control of the breath only by thought and will and knowledge (of the science of breath).

*Prāṇāyāma* is of four kinds: external (*bāhya-viṣaya*), internal (*ābhyantara-viṣaya*), still (*stambha-vṛtti*), and 'stop-out', 'stop-in' by control (*bāhyābhyantarākṣepī*).

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The four *prāṇāyāmas* are like this: To hold one's breath after exhalation outside the body for as long as easily possible is the first *prāṇāyāma.* To hold the breath inside after inhalation for as long as easily possible is the second *prāṇāyāma.* The third is *stambha-vṛtti* which means to 'neither exhale nor inhale, but to stop the breath where it is, and hold it as long as one comfortably can. The fourth one is as follows – when the breath is exhaled, stop it outside in parts; and when the breath is inhaled, stop it inside in parts, for as long as easily possible.[67]

When the yogi has successfully practiced *Prāṇāyāma* for a sufficient period of time, the *avidyā* or the ignorance, which veils over discriminative knowledge (*viveka*), starts getting reduced. The negative Sanskārs and the possibility of future negative *karmas,* begin to weaken.[68] The mind develops the capacity for contraction (*Dhāraṇā*), and the yogi develops the competence for concentration at will.[69] Maharshi Dayanand says that the yogi who practices meditation with *Prāṇāyāma* experiences that the veil of ignorance over the potential *jñāna* or discriminative knowledge, begins to disappear and the light of knowledge, increases.[70]

When the yogi is in control of *prāṇa,* he also gains control over the mind and senses. His mental strength increases, the intelligence (*buddhi*) grows fine and subtle, and sharp and his understanding of the meaning and purpose of life, expands. He can understand the subtle and difficult mysteries of life. His vitality of body and mind increases, stability of mind, strength, potential for advancement, sense control, memory and discrimination grow so fast that he can master the *shāstras* in a short time.[71] (Swami Dayanand too mastered the Vedas and shāstras, in the same way).

When one practices *Prāṇāyāma,* then every moment, darkness, impurity and ignorance thin out and knowledge and awareness increase, until one is free of all bondages of *prakṛti* and subsequently enjoys the state of *mokṣa.*[72] Maharshi Manu says[73]:

*Dahyante dhmāyamānānāṁ dha tūnāṁ hi yathā malāḥ.*
*Tathendriyāṇāṁ dahyante doṣāḥ prāṇasya nigrahāt.*

Just as in the fire, the impurities of metals such as gold get burnt off, similarly, by *Prāṇāyāma,* the impurities of the mind and senses get burnt out, leading to purity.[74]

## 5. PRATYĀHĀRA

The inward return of the senses in unison with the mind is called *Pratyāhāra.*[75] Through long and continuous practice of yoga, when the mind of the yogi becomes pure and peaceful, the business of his senses and mind too, stops by itself. The senses were, so far, wandering out to their objects at the direction of the mind. Now that the mind is still and at peace, the senses have nothing to do, so by themselves they retire and turn inwards in deference to the mind. They are silent, and at peace.

Maharshi Dayanand says that *Pratyāhāra* is that state, wherein one has won over the mind with full control, and the senses are won over and controlled on their own, because the mind is the mover and master of the senses.[76]

When the yogi is stabilised in *Pratyāhāra,* the senses are completely under his control. There is no need to try to control them any further.[77]

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## THE INTERNAL MEANS (SĀDHANĀS) OF YOGA

### 6. DHĀRAṆĀ

*Yogasūtra* says: *Deśabandhacittasya dhāraṇā.*[78] It means: when the yogi, according to his own will and choice, wants to fix and stabilise his mind and attention on some object of yogic values, and fixes it there at peace, that state of yoga is *Dhāraṇā.* This sate is achieved, when through the external means of yoga from *yama-niyama* to *Pratyāhāra,* the mind is at peace in the state of purity.

Maharshi Dayanand's view of *Dhāraṇā* is this: The mind, free from all its fluctuations, consciousness concentrated on any point such as the navel, heart, forehead, tip of the nose or tip of the tongue, and chanting Om identified with its content, *Parameśvara.* That is the state called *Dhāraṇā.*[79]

When the yogi stabilises his mind on some point – heart, *ājñācakra,* navel, etc. and meditates on the presence of God, then God is the object of meditation, the *jīvā,* i.e., the yogi is the meditator – this is internal positioning of *Dhāraṇā.* But when the yogi, keen on knowing some worldly object in its specific identity, concentrates the mind on that object, that is external positioning of *Dhāraṇā.*

### 7. DHYĀNA

Concentration of the mind and consciousness, un-interruptedly, wholly and exclusively, on the object of meditation, i.e., on God or on the same point as in the state of *Dhāraṇā,* is *Dhyāna.* In simple words, *Dhyāna* is the meditative continuation of *Dhāraṇā.*

*Yogasūtra* says: *Tatra pratyayaikatānatā dhyānam.*[80]
Explaining this sūtra, Maharshi Dayanand says: "Having attained the state of *Dhāraṇā,* meditation on God, with all love and thought, the yogi experiences an unearthly presence of the divine light and joy in and out of everywhere. To enter and merge with that light and joy just like a stream entering and merging with the sea, and to continue therein without interruption, is *Dhyāna.*"[81]

### 8. SAMĀDHI

Samādhi is the highest state of *Dhyāna.* When through *Dhyāna,* the mind withdrawn from all worldly objects and the consciousness withdrawn even from the self, concentrate and stabilise on God alone – that is *Samādhi.* In *Samādhi,* the yogi forgets even his own self, and merges with God-consciousness.

*Yogasūtra* says: *Tadeva-arthamātranirbhāsaṁ svarūpaśūnyamiva samādhiḥ.*[82]
Explaining this sūtra, Swamiji says: "Just as a piece of iron in the fire of a furnace becomes fire itself, the yogi's consciousness merges with the divine consciousness and divine self-refulgence, and in that state of *ānanda* or bliss forgets even its own identity."[83]

Having emerged from *Samādhi,* the *jīvātmā* can, in the waking state, feel the living presence of *Paramātmā.*

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## THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DHYĀNA AND SAMĀDHI

Maharshi Dayanand explains the difference between *Dhyāna* and *Samādhi*, as follows: In *Dhyāna*, the subject (The 'I' that meditates, the *yogi* as an *ātmā*), the object (the Thou, Īśvara, God, on whose light, presence and *ānanda*, the yogi meditates), and '*mana*' (the mind or the experience) – all the three, exist. In *Samādhi*, the three merge into one.

The state of *Samādhi* is like diving into water and staying in there for as long as one can.[84] When one emerges from *Samādhi*, just as one emerges from water, the person is a person, the water is water, and the experience was, for sure, an experience.

I, thou, experience – the three are distinct in *Dhyāna*, and are one in *Samādhi*.

In the language of yoga, these are called '*dhyāta, dhyāna* and *dhyeya*'.

In the language of psychology, these are called 'subject, object, and experience'.

In that stage of *yoga-sādhanā* when there is no distinction between the subject, the object, and the experience, one achieves the state of *Samādhi*.

## DHĀRAṆĀ, DHYĀNA AND SAMĀDHI (SAMYAMA)

In the *Yogasūtra*, the three, *Dhāraṇā, Dhyāna* and *Samādhi* are called *Samyama*.[85]

Maharshi Dayanand says that the three are, in the end, not three, because the technique, although linear in description, is actually simultaneous for the efficient yogi. It hardly takes any time to move from *Dhāraṇā* to *Dhyāna* to *Samādhi*. The *phala*, the result of all three, is the same: direct experience of the presence, power and *ānanda* of the infinite Divinity by the finite human.[86]

The practical technique of yoga for God-realisation may be followed thus: Below the throat, above the stomach, between the nipples, lies *Hṛdayadeśa*, 'The city of God'. Therein, in the heart lotus, is the divine presence of the Saccidānanda, God Almighty with all His refulgence. Centre all your consciousness there, persist in the practice with perfect faith, and one day you will see the light. Patañjali is the guide, says Dayanand, and this is the way. This is *Upāsanā Yoga, Param Dharma*, self-realisation through the practice of *yoga*. Indulgence and '*sādhanā*' do not go together for success. The Gītā says:

> If a person's food and daily habits and conduct are well ordered, if the intention, will and action, sleep and the wakeful state are well controlled – yoga would remove all his problems of pain and suffering, for sure. Further, if a person eats too much or too little, staying hungry as a part of virtue, sleeps too much or too little, then too, there would be no success.[87]

***A Word of Caution:*** Yogic Success does not favour bad conduct. Unless a person gives up the evil in thoughts, words and deeds; works for peace of mind, engages his heart and soul for the attainment of "*puruṣārtha*"; purifies himself internally and externally; studies and listen to sermons, he cannot realise his own self or the Supreme *Ātman*.[88]

*Ayaṁ tu paramo dharmo yadyogenātmadarśanam.* (अयं तु परमो धर्मो यद्योगेनात्मदर्शनम्।)

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## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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2. *Kaṭhopaniṣad,* chapter 2, Valli 2, mantra 3,10,11
3. *Gītā,* 2.50; योगः कर्मसु कौशलम्; *Gītā,* 2.48; समत्वं योग उच्यते।
4. *Ibid.,* 4.37
5. *Ibid.,* 4.38
6. *Ibid.,* 2.47
7. *Ibid.,* 2.48
8. *Ibid.,* 2.50
9. *Ibid.,* 2.48
10. Swami Dayanand has not recommended *Haṭhayoga* (Editor).
11. *Yogadarśana,* 2.29
12. Dayanand, 1951, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Upāsanā Viṣaya,* Vedic Yantralaya, Ajmer
13. *Yogadarśana,* 2.30
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15. Dayanand Saraswati, *op. cit., Upāsanā Viṣaya,*
16. *Yogadarśana,* 2.35
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18. *Ibid.*
19. *Yogadarśana,* 2.30, Vyāsa Bhāshya
20. Dayanand Saraswati, *op. cit., Upāsanā Viṣaya;* cf. *Yogadarśana,* 2.36
21. Dayanand Saraswati, *op. cit., Upāsanā Viṣaya*
22. *Ibid., Yogadarśana,* 2.37
23. Dayanand Saraswati, *op. cit., Upāsanā Viṣaya*
24. *Yogadarśana,* 2.38
25. Dayanand Saraswati, 1925, *Satyarth Prakash,* chapter 3, Vedic Yantralaya, Ajmer.
26. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Upāsanā Viṣaya*
27. See *Yogadarśana,* 2.30, Vyāsa Bhāshya
28. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Upāsanā Viṣaya*
29. Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash,* chapter 3
30. *Yogadarśana,* 2.39
31. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Upāsanā Viṣaya*
32. *Yogadarśana,* 2.32
33. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Upāsanā Viṣaya*
34. *Manusmriti,* 5.109; अद्भिर्गात्राणि शुद्धयन्ति, मनः सत्येन शुद्धयति। विद्यातपोभ्यां भूतात्मा, बुद्धिर्ज्ञानेन शुद्धयति।
35. Dayanand Saraswati, 1968, *Sanskārvidhi, Gṛhyāśrama Sanskār,* Vedic Yantralaya, Ajmer
36. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Upāsanā Viṣaya;* cf. *Yogadarśana,* 2.40-41
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38. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Upāsanā Viṣaya*
39. *Yogadarśana,* 2.30, Vyāsa Bhāshya
40. *Yogadarśana,* 2.42; सन्तोषादनुत्तमः सुखलाभः
41. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Upāsanā Viṣaya*
42. *Yogadarśana,* 2.41
43. *Ibid.,* 2.32
44. *Gītā,* 17.14-17
45. *Ibid.,* 17.5-6
46. Dayanand Saraswati, *Sanskārvidhi, Sannyāsa Prakarṇam*
47. Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash,* chapter 3

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48. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Upāsanā Viṣaya*
49. *Yogadarśana*, 2.43; कायेन्द्रियसिद्धिरशुद्धिक्षयात्तपसः।; *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Upāsanā Viṣaya*; पूर्वोक्त तप से उनके शरीर और इन्द्रियाँ अशुद्धि के क्षय से दृढ़ होके सदा रोगरहित रहती हैं।
50. *Yogadarśana*, 2.32, Vyāsa Bhāshya
51. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Upāsanā Viṣaya*
52. *Yogadarśana*, 2.44
    Please see, Vyāsa Bhāshya; देवा ऋषयः सिद्धाश्च स्वाध्यायशीलस्य दर्शनं गच्छन्ति कार्ये चास्य वर्तन्त इति।
53. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Upāsanā Viṣaya*
54. *Yogadarśana*, 2.32, Vyāsa Bhāshya
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56. *Ibid.*
57. *Yogadarśana*, 2.29
58. *Ibid.*, 2.31
59. *Manusmriti*, 4.204; यमान्सेवेत सततं न नित्यं नियमान्बुधः। यमान्पतत्यकुर्वाणो नियमान्केवलान्भजन्॥
60. Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter 3
61. *Yogadarśana*, 2.46
62. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Upāsanā Viṣaya*
63. *Yogadarśana*, 2.47
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66. *Yogadarśana*, 2.49
67. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Upāsanā Viṣaya*
68. *Yogadarśana*, 2.52, see Vyāsa Bhāshya
69. *Ibid.*, 2.53
70. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Upāsanā Viṣaya*
71. Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter 3
72. *Ibid.*
73. *Manusmriti*, 6.71; दह्यन्ते ध्मायमानानां धातूनां हि यथा मलाः। तथेन्द्रियाणां दह्यन्ते दोषाः प्राणस्य निग्रहात्॥
74. Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter 3
75. *Yogadarśana*, 2.54
76. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Upāsanā Viṣaya*
77. *Yogadarśana*, 2.55; see *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Upāsanā Viṣaya* on ततः परमा वश्यतेन्द्रियाणाम्।
78. *Yogadarśana*, 3.1
79. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Upāsanā Viṣaya*
80. *Yogadarśana*, 3.2
81. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Upāsanā Viṣaya*
82. *Yogadarśana*, 3.3
83. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Upāsanā Viṣaya*
84. *Ibid.*
85. *Yogadarśana*, 3.4
86. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Upāsanā Viṣaya*
87. *Gītā*, 6.17
88. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā, Upāsanā Viṣaya*; *Kaṭhopaniṣad*, Valli 2, mantra 24

(Translated from Hindi to English by Prof. Tulsi Ram)

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## SECTION VII
## Swami Dayanand Saraswati and Arya Samaj in the Eyes of Others

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CHAPTER 45

# Dayananda: The Man and the Vedas

*Sri Aurobindo*

## I
## THE MAN AND HIS WORK

Among the great company of remarkable figures that will appear to the eye of posterity at the head of the Indian Renascence, one stands out by himself with peculiar and solitary distinctness, one unique in his type as he is unique in his work. It is as if one were to walk for a long time amid a range of hills rising to a greater or lesser altitude, but all with sweeping contours, green-clad, flattering the eye even in their most bold and striking elevation. But amidst them all, one hill stands apart, piled up in sheer strength, a mass of bare and puissant granite, with verdure on its summit, a solitary pine jutting out into the blue, a great cascade of pure, vigorous and fertilising water gushing out from its strength as a very fountain of life and health to the valley. Such is the impression created on my mind by Dayananda.

It was Kathiawar that gave birth to this puissant renovator and new-creator. And something of the very soul and temperament of that peculiar land entered into his spirit, something of Girnar and the rocks and hills, something of the voice and puissance of the sea that flings itself upon those coasts, something of that humanity which seems to be made of the virgin and unspoilt stuff of Nature, fair and robust in body, instinct with a fresh and primal vigour, crude but in a developed nature capable of becoming a great force of genial creation.

When I seek to give an account to myself of my sentiment and put into precise form the impression I have received, I find myself starting from two great salient characteristics of this man's life and work which mark him off from his contemporaries and compeers. Other great Indians have helped to make India of to-day by a self-

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pouring into the psychological material of the race, a spiritual infusion of themselves into the fluent and indeterminate mass which will one day settle into consistency and appear as a great formal birth of Nature. They have entered in as a sort of leaven, a power of unformed stir and ferment out of which forms must result. One remembers them as great souls and great influences who live on in the soul of India. They are in us and we would not be what we are without them. But of no precise form can we say that this was what the man meant, still less that this form was the very body of that spirit.

The example of Mahadev Govind Ranade presents itself to my mind as the very type of this peculiar action so necessary to a period of large and complex formation. If a foreigner were to ask us what this Maharatta economist, reformer, patriot precisely did that we give him so high a place in our memory, we should find it a little difficult to answer. We should have to point to those activities of a mass of men in which his soul and thought were present as a formless former of things, to the great figures of present-day Indian life who received the breath of his spirit. And in the end we should have to reply by a counter question, "What Would Maharashtra of to-day have been without Mahadev Govind Ranade and what would India of to-day be without Maharashtra?" But even with those who were less amorphous and diffusive in their pressure on men and things, even with workers of a more distinct energy and action, I arrive fundamentally at the same impression. Vivekananda was a soul of puissance if ever there was one, a very lion among men, but the definite work he has left behind is quite incommensurate with our impression of his creative might and energy. We perceive his influence still working gigantically, we know not well how, we know not well where in something that is not yet formed, something leonine, grand, intuitive, upheaving that has entered the soul of India and we say, "Behold, Vivekananda still lives in the soul of his Mother and in the souls of her children." So it is with all. Not only are the men greater than their definite works, but their influence is so wide and formless that it has little relation to any formal work that they have left behind them.

Very different was the manner of working of Dayananda. Here was one who did not infuse himself informally into the indeterminate soul of things, but stamped his figure indelibly as in bronze on men and things. Here was one whose formal works are the very children of his spiritual body, children fair and robust and full of vitality, the image of their creator. Here was one who knew definitely and clearly the work he was sent to do, chose his materials, determined his conditions with a sovereign clairvoyance of the spirit and executed his conception with the puissant mastery of the born worker. As I regard the figure of this formidable artisan in God's workshop, images crowd on me which are all of battle and work and conquest and triumphant labour. Here, I say to myself, was a very soldier of Light, a warrior in God's world, a sculptor of men and institutions, a bold and rugged victor of the difficulties which matter presents to spirit. And the whole sums itself up to me in a powerful impression of spiritual practicality. The combination of these two words, usually so divorced from each other in our conceptions, seems to me the very definition of Dayananda.

Even if we leave out of account the actual nature of the work he did, the mere fact that he did it in this spirit and to this effect would give him a unique place among our great founders. He brings back an old Aryan element into the national character.

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This element gives us the second of the differential I observe and it is the secret of the first. We others live in a stream of influences; we allow them to pour through us and mould us; there is something shaped and out of it a modicum of work results, the rest is spilt out again in a stream of influence. We are indeterminate in our lines, we accommodate ourselves to circumstance and environment. Even when we would fain be militant and intransigent, we are really fluid and opportunist. Dayananda seized on all that entered in to him, held it in himself, masterfully shaped it there into the form that he saw to be right and threw it out again into the forms that he saw to be right. That which strikes us in him as militant and aggressive, was a part of his strength of self-definition.

He was not only plastic to the great hand of Nature, but asserted his own right and power to use Life and Nature as plastic material. We can imagine his soul crying still to us with our insufficient spring of manhood and action, "Be not content, O Indian, only to be infinitely and grow vaguely, but see what God intends thee to be, determine in the light of His inspiration to what thou shalt grow. Seeing, hew that out of thyself, hew that out of Life. Be a thinker, but be also a doer; be a soul, but be also a man; be a servant of God, but be also a master of Nature!" For this was what he himself was; a man with God in his soul, vision in his eyes and power in his hands to hew out of life an image according to his vision. Hew is the right word. Granite himself, he smote out a shape of things with great blows as in granite.

In Dayananda's life we see always the puissant jet of this spiritual practicality. A spontaneous power and decisiveness is stamped everywhere on his work. And to begin with, what a master glance of practical intuition was this to go back trenchantly to the very root of Indian life and culture, to derive from the flower of its first birth the seed for a radical new birth! And what an act of grandiose intellectual courage to lay hold upon this scripture defaced by ignorant comment and oblivion of its spirit, degraded by misunderstanding to the level of an ancient document of barbarism, and to perceive in it its real worth as a scripture which conceals in itself the deep and energetic spirit of the forefathers who made this country and nation, – a scripture of divine knowledge, divine worship, divine action. I know not whether Dayananda's powerful and original commentary will be widely accepted as the definite word on the Veda. I think myself some delicate work is still called for to bring out other aspects of this profound and astonishing Revelation. But this matters little. The essential is that he seized justly on the Veda as India's Rock of Ages and had the daring conception to build on what his penetrating glance perceived in it a whole education of youth, a whole manhood and a whole nation-hood. Rammohan Roy, that other great soul and puissant worker who laid his hand on Bengal and shook her – to what mighty issues – out of her long, indolent sleep by her rivers and rice-fields – Rammohan Roy stopped short at the Upanishads. Dayananda looked beyond and perceived that our true original seed was the Veda. He had the national instinct and he was able to make it luminous, – an intuition in place of an instinct. Therefore the works that derive from him, however they depart from received traditions, must needs be profoundly national.

To be national is not to stand still. Rather, to seize on a vital thing out of the past and throw it into the stream of modern life, is really the most powerful means of

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renovation and new-creation. Dayananda's work brings back such a principle and spirit of the past to vivify a modern mould. And observe that in the work as in the life it is the past caught in the first jet of its virgin vigour, pure from its sources, near to its root principle and therefore to something eternal and always renewable.

And in the work as in the man we find that faculty of spontaneous definite labour and vigorous formation which proceeds from an inner principle of perfect clearness, truth and sincerity. To be clear in one's own mind, entirely true and plain with one's self and with others, wholly honest with the conditions and materials of one's labour, is a rare gift in our crooked, complex and faltering humanity. It is the spirit of the Aryan worker and a sure secret of vigorous success. For always Nature recognises a clear, honest and recognisable knock at her doors and gives the result with an answering scrupulosity and diligence. And it is good that the spirit of the Master should leave its trace in his followers, that somewhere in India there should be a body of whom it can be said that when a work is seen to be necessary and right, the men will be forthcoming, the means forthcoming and that work will surely be done.

Truth seems a simple thing and is yet most difficult. Truth was the master-word of the Vedic teaching, truth in the soul, truth in vision, truth in the intention, truth in the act. Practical truth, ārjava, an inner candour and a strong sincerity, clearness and open honour in the word and deed, was the temperament of the old Aryan morals. It is the secret of a pure unspoilt energy, the sign that a man has not travelled far from Nature. It is the bar dexter of the son of Heaven, Divasputra. This was the stamp that Dayananda left behind him and it should be the mark and effigy of himself by which the parentage of his work can be recognised. May his spirit act in India pure, unspoilt, unmodified and help to give us back that of which our life stands especially in need, pure energy, high clearness, the penetrating eye, the masterful hand, the noble and dominant sincerity.

## II
## DAYANANDA AND THE VEDA

Dayananda accepted the Veda as his rock of firm foundation, he took it for his guiding view of life, his rule of inner existence and his inspiration for external work, but he regarded it as even more, the word of eternal Truth on which man's knowledge of God and his relations with the Divine Being and with his fellows can be rightly and securely founded. This everlasting rock of the Veda, many assert, has no existence, there is nothing there but the commonest mud and sands, it is only a hymnal of primitive barbarians, only a rude worship of personified natural phenomena, or even less than that, a liturgy of ceremonial sacrifice, half religion, half magic, by which superstitious animal men of yore hoped to get themselves gold and food and cattle, slaughter pitilessly their enemies, protect themselves from disease, calamity and demoniac influences and enjoy the coarse pleasures of a material Paradise. To that we must add a third view, the orthodox, or at least that which arises from Sayana's commentary; this view admits, practically, the ignobler interpretation of the substance of Veda and yet –

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or is it therefore? – exalts this primitive farrago as a holy Scripture and a Book of Sacred Works.

Now this matter is no mere scholastic question, but has a living importance, not only for a just estimate of Dayananda's work, but for our consciousness of our past and for the determination of the influences that shall mould our future. A nation grows into what it shall be by the force of that which it was in the past and is in the present, and in this growth there come periods of conscious and subconscious stock-taking when the national soul selects, modifies, rejects, keeps out of all that it had or is acquiring whatever it needs as substance and capital for its growth and action in the future: in such a period of stock-taking we are still and Dayananda was one of its great and formative spirits. But among all the materials of our past the Veda is the most venerable and has been directly and indirectly the most potent. Even when its sense was no longer understood, even when its traditions were lost behind Pauranic forms, it was still held in honour, though without knowledge, as authoritative revelation and inspired Book of Knowledge, the source of all sanctions and standard of all truth.

But there has always been this double and incompatible tradition about the Veda that it is a book of ritual and mythology and that it is a book of divine knowledge: The Brahmanas seized on the one tradition, the Upanishads on the other. Later, the learned took the hymns for a book essentially of ritual and works, they went elsewhere for pure knowledge, but the instinct of the race bowed down before it with an obstinate inarticulate memory of a loftier tradition. And when in our age the Veda was brought out of its obscure security behind the purdah of a reverential neglect, the same phenomenon reappears. While Western scholarship extending the hints of Sayana seemed to have classed it forever as a ritual liturgy to Nature-Gods, the genius of the race looking through the eyes of Dayananda pierced behind the error of many centuries and had again the intuition of a timeless revelation and a divine truth given to humanity. In any case, we have to make one choice or another. We can no longer securely enshrine the Veda wrapped up in the folds of an ignorant reverence or guarded by a pious self-deceit. Either the Veda is what Sayana says it is, and then we have to leave it behind for ever as the document of a mythology and ritual which have no longer any living truth or force for thinking minds, or it is what the European scholars say it is, and then we have to put it away among the relics of the past as an antique record of semi-barbarous worship; or else it is indeed Veda, a book of divine knowledge, and then it becomes of supreme importance to us to know and to hear its message.

It is objected to the sense Dayananda gave to the Veda that it is no true sense but an arbitrary fabrication of imaginative learning and ingenuity, to his method that it is fantastic and unacceptable by the critical reason, to his teaching of a revealed Scripture that the very idea is a rejected superstition impossible for any enlightened mind to admit or to announce sincerely. I will not now examine the solidity of Dayananda's interpretation of Vedic texts, nor anticipate the verdict of the future on his commentary, nor discuss his theory of revelation. I shall only state the broad principles underlying his thought about the Veda as they present themselves to me. For in the action and thought of a great soul or a great personality the vital thing to my mind is

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not the form he gave to it, but in his action the helpful power he put forth and in his thought the helpful truth he has added or, it may be, restored to the yet all too scanty stock of our human acquisition and divine potentiality.

To start with the negation of his work by his critics, in whose mouth does it lie to accuse Dayananda's dealings with the Veda of a fantastic or arbitrary ingenuity? Not in the mouth of those who accept Sayana's traditional interpretation. For if ever there was a monument of arbitrarily erudite ingenuity, of great learning divorced, as great learning too often is, from sound judgement and sure taste and a faithful critical and comparative observation, from direct seeing and often even from plainest common sense or of a constant fitting of the text into the Procrustean bed of preconceived theory, it is surely this commentary, otherwise so imposing, so useful as first crude material, so erudite and laborious, left to us by the Acharya Sayana. Nor does the reproach lie in the month of those who take as final the recent labours of European scholarship. For if ever there was a toil of interpretation in which the loosest rein has been given to an ingenious speculation, in which doubtful indications have been snatched at as certain proofs, in which the boldest conclusions have been insisted upon with the scantiest justification, the most enormous difficulties ignored and preconceived prejudice maintained in face of the clear and often admitted suggestions of the text, it is surely this labour, so eminently respectable otherwise for its industry, good will and power of research, performed through a long century by European Vedic scholarship.

What is the main positive issue in this matter? An interpretation of Veda must stand or fall by its central conception of the Vedic religion and the amount of support given to it by the intrinsic evidence of the Veda itself. Here Dayananda's view is quite clear, its foundation inexpugnable. The Vedic hymns are chanted to the One Deity under many names, names which are used and even designed to express His qualities and powers. Was this conception of Dayananda's an arbitrary conceit fetched out of his own too ingenious imagination? Not at all; it is the explicit statement of the Veda itself: "One existent, sages" – not the ignorant, mind you, but the seers, the men of knowledge, – "speak of in many ways, as Indra, as Yama, as Maharishwan, as Agni." The Vedic Rishis ought surely to have known something about their own religion, more, let us hope, than Roth or Max Müller, and this is what they knew.

We are aware how modern scholars twist away from the evidence. This hymn, they say, was a late production, this loftier idea which it expresses with so clear a force rose up somehow in the later Aryan mind or was borrowed by those ignorant fire-worshippers, sun-worshippers, sky-worshippers from their cultured and philosophic Dravidian enemies. But throughout the Veda we have confirmatory hymns and expressions: Agni or Indra or another is expressly hymned as one with all the other gods. Agni contains all other divine powers within himself, the Maruts are described as all the gods, one deity is addressed by the names of others as well as his own, or, most commonly, he is given as Lord and King of the universe attributes only appropriate to the Supreme Deity. Ah, but that cannot mean, ought not to mean, must not mean, the worship of the One; let us invent a new word, call it henotheism and suppose that the Rishis did not really believe Indra or Agni to be the Supreme Deity but treated any god

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or every god as such for the nonce, perhaps that he might feel the more flattered and lend a more gracious ear for so hyperbolic a compliment! But why should not the foundation of Vedic thought be natural monotheism rather than this new-fangled monstrosity of henotheism? Well, because primitive barbarians could not possibly have risen to such high conceptions and, if you allow them to have so risen, you imperil our theory of the evolutionary stages of human development and you destroy our whole idea about the sense of the Vedic hymns and their place in the history of mankind. Truth must hide herself, common sense disappear from the field so that a theory may flourish! I ask, in this point, and it is *the* fundamental point, who deals most straight forwardly with the text, Dayananda or the Western scholars?

But if this fundamental point of Dayananda's is granted, if the character given by the Vedic Rishis themselves to their gods is admitted, we are bound, whenever the hymns speak of Agni or another, to see behind that name present always to the thought of the Rishi the one Supreme Deity or else one of His powers with its attendant qualities or workings. Immediately the whole character of the Veda is fixed in the sense Dayananda gave to it; the merely ritual, mythological, polytheistic interpretation of Sayana collapses, the merely meteorological and naturalistic European interpretation collapses. We have instead a real Scripture, one of the world's sacred books and the divine word of a lofty and noble religion.

All the rest of Dayananda's theory arises logically out of this fundamental conception. If the names of the god-heads express qualities of the one Godhead and it is these which the Rishis adored and towards which they directed their aspiration, then there must inevitably be in the Veda a large part of psychology of the Divine Nature, psychology of the relations of man with God and a constant indication of the law governing man's God ward conduct. Dayananda asserts the presence of such an ethical element, he finds in the Veda the law of life given by God to the human being. And if the Vedic godheads express the powers of a supreme Deity who is Creator, Ruler and Father of the universe, then there must inevitably be in the Veda a large part of cosmology, the law of creation and the law of Nature by which the Omniscient governs the World.

Neither Western scholarship nor ritualistic learning has succeeded in eliminating the psychological and ethical value of the hymns, but they have both tended in different degrees to minimise it. Western scholars minimise because they feel uneasy whenever ideas that are not primitive seem to insist on their presence in these primeval utterances; they do not hesitate openly to abandon in certain passages interpretations which they adopt in others and which are admittedly necessitated by their own philological and critical reasoning because, if admitted always, they would often involve deep and subtle psychological conceptions which *cannot* have occurred to primitive minds! Sayana minimises because his theory of Vedic discipline was not ethical righteousness with a moral and spiritual result but mechanical performance of ritual with a material reward. But, inspite of these efforts of suppression, the lofty ideas of the Vedas still reveal themselves in strange contrast to its alleged burden of fantastic naturalism or dull ritualism. The Vedic godheads are constantly hymned as Masters of Wisdom, Power, Purity, purifiers, healers of grief and evil, destroyers of sin and

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falsehood, warriors for the truth; constantly the Rishis pray to them for healing and purification, to be made seers of knowledge, possessors of the truth, to be upheld in the divine law, to be assisted and armed with strength, manhood and energy. Dayananda has brought this idea of the divine right and truth into the Veda; the Veda is as much and more a book of divine Law as Hebrew Bible or Zoroastrain Avesta.

The cosmic element is not less conspicuous in the Veda; the Rishis speak always of the worlds, the firm laws that govern them, the divine workings in the cosmos. But Dayananda goes farther; he affirms that the truths of modern physical science are discoverable in the hymns. Here we have the sole point of fundamental principle about which there can be any justifiable misgivings. I confess my incompetence to advance any settled opinion in the matter. But this much needs to be said that his idea is increasingly supported by the recent trend of our knowledge about the ancient world. The ancient civilisations did possess secret of science some of which modern knowledge has recovered, extended and made more rich and precise but others are even now not recovered. There is then nothing fantastic in Dayananda's idea that Veda contains truth of science as well as truth of religion. I will even add my own conviction that Veda contains other truths of a science the modern world does not at all possess, and in that case Dayananda has rather understated than overstated the depth and range of the Vedic wisdom.

Objection has also been made to the philological and etymological method by which he arrived at his results, especially in his dealings with the names of the godheads. But this objection, I feel certain, is an error due to our introduction of modern ideas about language into our study of this ancient tongue. We moderns use words as counters without any memory or appreciation of their original sense; when we speak we think of the object spoken of, not at all of the expressive word which is to us a dead and brute thing, mere coin of verbal currency with no value of its own. In early language the word was on the contrary a living thing with essential power of signification; its root meanings were remembered because they were still in use, its wealth of force was vividly present to the mind of the speaker. We say "wolf" and think only of the animal, any other sound would have served our purpose as well, given the convention of its usage; the ancient said "tearer" and had that significance present to them. We say "agni" and think of fire, the word is of no other use to us; to the ancients "agni" means other things besides and only because of one or more of its root meanings was applied to the physical object fire. Our words are carefully limited to one or two senses, theirs were capable of a great number and it was quite easy for them, if they so chose, to use a word like Agni, Varuna or Vayu as a sound-index of a great number of connected and complex ideas, a key-word. It cannot be doubted that the Vedic Rishis did take advantage of this greater potentiality of their language, – note their dealings with such words as *gau* and *chandra*. The Nirukta bears evidence to this capacity and in the Brahmanas and Upanishads we find the memory of this free and symbolic use of words still subsisting.

Certainly, Dayananda had not the advantage that a comparative study of languages gives to the European scholar. There are defects in the ancient Nirukta which the new learning, though itself sadly defective, still helps us to fill in and in future

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we shall have to use both sources of light for the elucidation of Veda. Still this only affects matters of detail and does not touch the fundamental principles of Dayananda's interpretation. Interpretation in detail is a work of intelligence and scholarship and in matters of intelligent opinion and scholarship men seem likely to differ, but in all the basic principles, in those great and fundamental decisions where the eye of intuition has to aid the workings of the intellect, Dayananda stands justified by the substance of Veda itself, by logic and reason and by our growing knowledge of the past of mankind. The Veda does hymn the one Deity of many names and powers; it does celebrate the divine Law and men's aspiration to fulfil it; it does purport to give us the law of the cosmos.

On the question of revelation I have left myself no space to write. Suffice it to say that here too Dayananda was perfectly logical and it is quite grotesque to charge him with insincerity because he held to and proclaimed the doctrine. There are always three fundamental entities which we have to admit and whose relations we have to know if we would understand existence at all, God, Nature and the Soul. If, as Dayananda held on strong enough grounds, the Veda reveals to us God, reveals to us the law of Nature, reveals to us the relations of the soul to God and Nature, what is it but a revelation of divine Truth? And if, as Dayananda held, it reveals them to us with a perfect truth, flawlessly, he might well hold it for an infallible Scripture. The rest is a question of the method of revelation, of the divine dealings with our race, of man's psychology and possibilities. Modern thought, affirming Nature and Law but denying God, denied also the possibility of revelation; but so also has it denied many things which a more modern thought is very busy reaffirming. We cannot demand of a great mind that it shall make itself a slave to vulgarly received opinion or the transient dogmas of the hour; the very essence of its greatness is this, that it looks beyond, that it sees deeper.

In the matter of Vedic interpretation I am convinced that whatever may be the final complete interpretation, Dayananda will be honoured as the first discoverer of the right clues. Amidst the chaos and obscurity of old ignorance and age-long misunderstanding his was the eye of direct vision that pierced to the truth and fastened on that which was essential. He has found the keys of the doors that time had closed and rent asunder the seals of the imprisoned fountains.

Source: Sri Aurobindo, 1940, *Bankim-Tilak-Dayananda*, Arya Publishing House, College Street, Calcutta, pp. 46-71.

Also see Vedic Magazine, Gurukula Kangri Vishwavidyalaya, Haridwar, April-May, 1916, pp. 951-959.

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# CHAPTER 46

# Swami Dayanand on Jainism in Satyarth Prakash

*Mukul Raj Mehta*

Indian culture consists of two main trends: Śramaṇic and Brāhmaṇic. The Vedic tradition or the views of the Arya Samaj, propounded by Swami Dayanand Saraswati, come under the Brāhmaṇic trend. The Śramaṇic trend covers the Jaina, Buddhist and similar other ascetic traditions. The Arya Samaj accepts the authority of the Vedas and Vedic literature. The Jainas and Buddhists have their own canons and canonical literature and accept their authority. The Arya Samaj founded by Swami Dayanand unequivocally condemns certain practices of different religions and communities that are noted to be prevalent, such as idol worship, animal sacrifice, pilgrimage, priest craft, offerings made in temples, the caste system by birth, child marriage, meat eating and discrimination against women, on the grounds that all these lack the sanction of the Vedas. The Arya Samaj discourages dogma and symbolism and encourages scepticism in beliefs that run contrary to common sense and logic.

***Swami Dayanand's Approach to the Vedas***

Dayanand is noted to have been active since the age of fourteen. By this time he was able to recite religious verses and teach about them. He is highly appreciated for taking part in religious debates (*Shāstrārthas*), which were often attended by relatively large gatherings. One of these remarkable debates occurred on November 16, 1869 at Varanasi, in which he won against nearly forty reputed scholars including Swami Vishuddhanand, Pandit Bal Shastri and Pandit Tarachand Tarkratna. The debate is said to have been attended by over 50,000 people. The main topic was "Do the Vedas uphold idol worship?"

Dayanand has explained his Vedic concepts in *Ṛgvedādibhāshyabhūmikā* with the commitment:

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> I shall explain the mantras by following the ancient method of interpretation of the Aryan saints and seers (i.e., *Munis* and *Ṛṣis*) and not otherwise (i.e., the method followed by Sāyaṇa and others). This (commentary) will frustrate and foil all blemishes of modern commentaries and glosses that cast a slur upon and grossly misinterpret the Vedas, and will reveal the ancient and accurate meaning of the Vedic lore. May this attempt (of mine) be successful by the grace of Lord.[1]

His main assumptions are: The Vedas are the word of God,[2] eternal,[3] self-evident and the book of true knowledge.[4] They do not contain the biography of any person.[5] Everyone has the right to study and teach the Vedas.[6]

***Swami Dayanand's Criticism of Other Traditions***

Dayanand Saraswati is known to have read a lot about various religions other than Hinduism, such as Sikhism, Buddhism, Jainism, Christianity and Islam. He has discussed these religions in his book Satyarth Prakash. His analysis seems critical to some in its nature, while to some others he has presented a perfect understanding. In the twelfth *Samullas* (chapter) of Satyarth Prakash, the *nāstika* (atheist) schools of Indian thought like Chārvāka, Bauddha and Jaina have been discussed and criticised. At places, the criticism reaches to the extent that the Jaina and Buddhist thoughts have been tried to be proven as one and the same. Swamiji quotes Raja Shiv Prasad Sitār-e-Hind in this context and then remarks,

> The ignorant *Jainees* neither know anything about their own religion nor that of others. Being blinded by prejudice they simply talk nonsense, but those who are learned among them know very well that the word *Buddha* is synonymous with *Jina* and *Bauddha* (Buddhist) with *Jainee*. There is not the least doubt about it.[7]

He adds,

> some of the Buddhists are *Vāma Mārgis* and eat meat and drink spirituous liquors. The Jainas differ from them, *Mahāvīra* and *Gautama Gaṇdharas* (Lords of hosts) are called *Buddhas* by the Buddhists, while they have been named *Gaṇdhara* and *Jinavara* by the Jainees.[8]

Swami Dayanand Saraswati has criticised the Jaina principles of atheism, *karma*, *anekāntavāda*, fast unto death etc.

While considering the views of Swami Dayanand or the Arya Samaj on Jainism, it is to be remembered that Jainism is an independent and most ancient religion of India. It has been flourishing on this land since time immemorial. It is wrong to say that Jainism was founded by Lord Mahavira. Even Lord Parsva cannot be regarded as the founder of this religion. It is equally incorrect to maintain that Jainism is nothing more than a revolt against the Vedic religion. The Jaina culture, which now represents the Śramaṇic culture in India, is non-Vedic, non-Aryan and non-Brāhmaṇic. It has its own peculiarities. In fact, Indian culture is a composite culture. The two most predominant

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currents in the stream of Indian culture are Brāhmaṇism and Śramaṇism. They have greatly influenced each other, and thereby, contributed to the composite Indian culture. It is true that they have some similarities and certain common principles. But it is equally true that they have their own peculiarities and marked differences.

Swami Dayanand begins the twelfth chapter of Satyarth Prakash saying *Atha nāstikamatāntargatacārvāka-bauddha-jainamata-khaṇḍana-maṇḍanaviṣayān vyākhyāsyāmaḥ* (Now, I begin the exposition and refutation of the Chārvāka, the Buddhist and the Jaina faiths, all of which are atheistic). He mentions "Once there lived (in India) a man named Vrihaspati who did not believe in the existence of God, in (the revealed character of) the Veda and in the virtuous deeds, such as *Yajñas.*"[9]

Swami Dayanand goes on to criticise the Chārvāka and the Buddhists. It is stated therein "the Jainees believe in the same *Tirthankaras* (perfect beings or incarnations) as the Buddhists. Both these religions are, therefore, identical."[10] While discussing the Jaina faith in Satyarth Prakash, the criticism is usually quite bitter. Swamiji has raised an objection in connection with the 'Concept of Substance' (*Dravya Siddhānta*) of Jainism holding that *dharma* and *adharma* are not substances (*dravya*) but attributes. Both come under *jīvāstikāya.* Admitting *jīva* as conscious entity but not believing in God is a false prejudice of Jainas and Buddhists, says Swamiji. However, it is significant here that in Jaina philosophy *dharma* and *adharma* have been defined in a technical way and not as attributes. Radhakrishnan says:

> *Dharma* is the principle of motion. It is devoid of the qualities of taste, colour, smell, sound and contact. It pervades the whole world, and is continuous because of inseparability; has extension because of co-extensiveness with space... *Adharma* is the principle of rest. It is also devoid of sense qualities, is non-corporeal and co-extensive with 'lokākāśa'... *dharma* and *adharma* in Jaina philosophy do not stand for merit and demerit for which it has different terms – puṇya and pāpa. They are the forces that cause movement and rest.[11]

***Anekāntavāda* (*Theory of Manifoldness*)**

*Anekāntavāda* is the heart of Jaina metaphysics and *Nayavāda, Syādvāda* (the doctrine of somehow) and *Saptabhaṅgī* (seven periphrases) are its main arteries. To use a happier metaphor, the bird of *anekāntavāda* flies on its two wings of *nayavāda* and *syādvāda.* The traditional viewpoints are presented in the old Prākṛta and Sanskrit works. Sizeable literature, which is commensurate with the magnitude and importance of these problems and which represents a significant effort for achieving a reorientation of these problems to the trends of modern thought, has come into existence, although the need of more such efforts cannot be exaggerated.

The theory of identity-in-difference, the metaphysical presupposition of *anekāntavāda,* animating all the spheres of Jaina philosophical thinking, recognises the objectivity of the material universe. The objectivity of the universe signifies the fact that the universe is independent of the mind or consciousness. This independence, or the duality of consciousness and the material universe, necessarily presupposes the

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principle of distinction, which exerts a compulsive force until the logical goal of this principle is reached in the form of the development of the Jaina concepts of reality and knowledge into the comprehensive scheme of *anekānta* realism. In other words, once the initial step is taken, namely the recognition of the principle of distinction as being the root of the duality of the mind and the world, there is no stopping short of working out, to their logical conclusion, the consequences of the operation of the principle of distinction. The claim that *anekāntavāda* is the most consistent form of realism lies in the fact that Jainism has allowed the principle of distinction to run its full course until it reaches its logical terminus, the theory of manifoldness of reality and knowledge. The first significant step to be taken, once the operative principle of distinction is accepted, is the postulation of a multiplicity of ultimate realities constituting the cosmos. The objective world is constituted, according to Jaina ontology, by five ultimate realities: viz., matter (*pudgala*) space (*ākāśa*), time (*kāla*), the medium of motion *(dharma*) and the medium of rest (*adharma*); and the mental or the subjective world consists of an infinity of independent souls or spirits, in their conditioned or free existence. An analysis, on the physical as well as on the spiritual side, reveals, therefore, a multiple or pluralistic universe.

The other step fulfils the purpose of the ubiquitously operative principle of distinction, and imparts the name of '*anekāntavāda*', after which the entire Jaina metaphysics is often known, is the postulation of manifoldness, or inherent complexity within each of the realities in the universe. In other words, reality, according to Jainism, in not merely multiple but each real, in its turn, is manifold or complex to its core. Reality is thus a complex web of many-ness (*aneka*) and manifoldness (*anekānta*). The central thesis of the Jaina philosophy is, according to a modern critic, "that there is not only diversity in the reals, but each real is equally diversified."[12]

The diversification or manifoldness, also described as indeterminateness or indefiniteness, may be illustrated by the two instances of matter and space in the physical universe. Dealing with the atomic theory of matter and space in Jainism, M. Hiriyanna observes:

> The atoms, according to it (Jainism) are all of the same kind, but they can yet give rise to the infinite variety of things so that matter as conceived here is of quite an indefinite nature. *Pudgala* (matter) has, as we know, certain inalienable features; but within the limits imposed by them it can become anything through qualitative differentiations. The transmutation of elements is quite possible in this view and is not a mere dream of the alchemist.[13]

The material world evolves from the diversifications of these homogeneous atoms into aggregates of earth, water, fire and air. It has been pointed out that:

> Jainism also, like Upaniṣadas, does not stop in its analysis of the physical universe at the elements of *prithivi,* etc. It pushes it farther back where qualitative differentiation has not yet taken place. But while in the latter the ultimate stage

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is represented by the monistic principle of Brahman, here it is taken by infinity of atoms.[14]

Indicating that the character of indefiniteness or indeterminateness is extended to the sphere of quality also, the same writer further observes: "It is not qualitatively only that matter is indefinite. Quantitatively also it is regarded as undetermined. It may increase or decrease in volume without addition or loss."[15] A further treatment of the notion of manifoldness of matter in connection with the problem whether an atom has, and if so in what sense it has, an infinite part *(anśa)*, despite the fact it is impartite (*niravayava*) in its nature. Again, in the instance of matter, the brief hints hitherto given of the Jaina atomic theory sufficiently indicate the nature of indeterminateness or manifoldness in reality.

***Syādvāda (the Doctrine of Somehow)***

*Syādvāda* or *Saptabhaṅgī* is that conditional method in which the modes or predications *(bhaṅgaḥ)* affirm *(vidhi)*, negate *(niṣedha)* or both affirm and negate, severally *(prthagbhuta)* or jointly (*samudita*), in seven different ways, a certain attribute (*dharma*) of a thing *(vastu)* without incompatibility *(avirodhena)* in a certain context *(prasnavasat)*. That is, no modal assertion, or proposition, – simple or complex; affirmative, negative or both, – can, at once, express anything other than an aspect (*prakāra*) of the truth of a thing. The full truth or rather the synthesis of truths can result only from a well-ordered scheme of propositions (*vacanavinyāsa*). Each proposition is therefore, relative to, or alternative with, the other propositions, which in their totality, present the full truth of the thing with respect to the particular attribute predicated of it. The famous sevenfold predication of Jainism is called *Saptabhaṅgī* (seven periphrases).

***Non-creationism***

According to the Jaina belief, the universe was never created. The universe and its constituents – soul, matter, space, time, and principles of motion – have always existed. All the constituents and actions are governed by universal natural laws. It is not possible to create matter out of nothing and hence the sum total of matter in the universe remains the same. Jaina texts claim that the universe consists of *jīva* (life force or souls), and *a-jīva* (lifeless objects). Similarly, the soul of each living being is unique and uncreated and has existed since beginningless time. The Jaina theory of causation holds that a cause and its effect are always identical in nature and hence a conscious and immaterial entity like God cannot create a material entity like the universe. Thus, according to the Jaina doctrine, "this world has neither a beginning nor an end. Neither was it ever created, nor will it ever perish. In other words, this world has never been created by anyone."

***Criticism by Swami Dayanand***

A detailed criticism of Jainism regarding the doctrine mentioned above has been done in the twelfth chapter of Satyarth Prakash by Dayanand Saraswati.

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The Arya Samaj believes that *Īśvara* (God), *jīva* (soul) and *prakṛti* (material cause of universe) are beginningless (*anādi*) and endless (*ananta*). Īśvara is *sat, chit* and *ānanda,* jīva is both *sat* and *chit* but the *prakṛti* has existence only. God created the universe. According to the Jaina viewpoint, there is no maker of universe. The universe is there by itself. Swamiji here raises an objection:

> This is a great blunder of Jainas. Can an act ever be done without a doer? Can an effect ever come into being without any effort on the part of the doer? Has anyone ever seen wheat being ground into flour and flour made into bread without the agency of man and the bread going without any effort on their part down the throats of the *Jainas*?[16]

He further says:

> All objects of this world are the result of the combination of their constituent elements, and are subject to creation and dissolution. Why is not this world, then, subject to creation and dissolution? Had your *Tirthankaras* possessed correct knowledge, they would not have written such impossible things (in their books). You are as ignorant as the founders of your faith were. A man who believes what you *Jainas* say, can never know the true nature of things. Why can't you believe that which is clearly the result of the combination of its constituent elements is subject to creation and dissolution? It is clear, then, that the teachers or the founders of the *Jaina* religion were not acquainted with the sciences of Geography and Astronomy, nor do the *Jainas*, at the present moment, possess any knowledge of these subjects, otherwise how could they have believed in, and taught, the... incredible things?[17]

Regarding *Anekāntavāda* and *Syādvāda,* Swamiji writes:

> All the above could be expressed by the use of the terms *Anyonyābhāva* (or reciprocal negation of identity), *Sādharmya* (similitude) and *Vaidharmya* (dissimilitude). To discard such easy expressions and concoct circumlocutory methods of expressing thought could have no object other than that of ensnaring the ignorant... while the fact of one being possessed of consciousness and the other devoid of it constitutes their dissimilitude, in other words consciousness exists in the soul but inertness does not. In like manner, their *Saptabhaṅgas* and *Syādvāda* become easily intelligible by reflecting a little on the similarities and dissimilarities between the characteristics (of different objects). Why should then, such circumlocutory and absurd expressions be concocted. Both the *Buddhists* and the *Jainas* equally believe in *Saptabhaṅga* and *Syādvāda.*[18]

Swamiji opines, "The Jainas hold that soul itself becomes God, and their *Tirthankaras* having attained salvation became God. They do not believe in an eternal God... It is

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wrong on the part of the Jainas to deny the existence of God on the ground that such proofs as direct cognition, etc., are wanting."[19] Expressing doubt, he asks:

> You believe your *Tirthankaras* to be God. Now, this can never be true, because unless they had parents, their bodies could not be formed. How could they have, then, practiced austerities and attained knowledge and salvation?... No one but *Jainas* with warped intellect could believe an entity which is possessed of finite power and is circumscribed as God... *Tirthankaras* were born of their parents, whose children were their parents and so on. There will thus be an absence of finality.[20]

Here it is necessary to explain the view-point of the *Jainas* that *Jainism* does not accept the similarity between *Īśvara* and *Tirthankaras* or *Tirthankaras* and *Avtāras*. According to *Jainees* "there is not one God in the universe, all the emancipated souls become God." Swamiji further raises an objection:

> This assertion is altogether absurd, because the soul, being emancipated after having been in bondage, must necessarily become subject to bondage again, because it is not free by nature. Your twenty-four *Tirthankaras* were in bondage before they were emancipated, hence they will necessarily become subject to bondage again. If there are many Gods, don't they quarrel and wrangle with each other just as men do here?[21]

Swami Dayanand attacks the *Tirthankaras* saying, "Now, here are a few samples of the false teachings of their *Tirthankaras* whom the Jainas believe to be possessed of correct knowledge and the state of God-hood."[22] Then he quotes Ratnasāra[23] about time, size of the bodies of scorpions, bugs, flies and quadrupeds etc., to show their ignorance of Geography, Astronomy and Mathematics. Swamiji is of the opinion that "the *Jaina* faith is calculated to ruin people (morally and spiritually) and the Vedic religion tends to the redemption of the world." He further says:

> It is foolish to indulge in self-praise, to extol one's own religion and to denounce other religions. That alone is worthy of praise which is praised by learned men belonging to another faith. Even thieves praise themselves. Does this prove that thievishness is worthy of praise?... How erroneous is this teaching! If the *Jaina* teachers and their disciples had been learned men, they would have (tried to inculcate) a love for the learned. When even their *tirthankaras* were ignorant, how could they be expected to revere the learned?... It is clear, therefore, that no sectarians are so much biased, perverse, wrong-headed and ignorant as the *Jainees* are.[24]

Reproducing certain extracts from Prakaranratnākar, such as – "all religions that are opposed to the Jaina faith lead mankind to sin. It is, therefore, best to shun all other faiths and to believe in the Jaina religion only."[25] Swamiji expressed the opinion that

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"the Jaina teachers knew very well that their teachings were absurd and could not stand the test of discussion and, therefore, thought it best to denounce all and thus to ensnare fools in their net."[26] He further says that "the Jaina religion teaches its followers to hate, denounce and regard with malice all that does not belong to it. It thus makes people wicked. No sectarians are so unreasonable and violent in their hatred of others as are the Jainees."[27] He goes to the extent of saying:

> how can it be possible for anybody to be possessed by vindictiveness, hostility and unreasoning prejudice against others in a greater degree than are the *Jainees*? Other sectarians have also these weaknesses but not to the extent to which the *Jainees* have them. Vindictiveness is at the root of all sins. What wonder, then, if some *Jainees* are wicked?"[28]

According to the Arya Samaj, God gives the souls the fruits of their deeds, but the Jainees have a contrary view-point. They believe that everyone gets punished according to one's natural instincts. For example, as drinking causes intoxication (without extrinsic aid), so does the soul receive the fruits of its deeds without the instrumentality of any other power. Swami Dayanand terms this argument as absurd and writes that "inveterate drunkards do not feel the effects of intoxication as do those who are not addicted to the vice. If your contention be right, those that are sinners of the deepest dye should be punished less severely than those who are not given much to sinful practices." "If there were no God, (the giver of the fruits of their deeds to souls), no soul will ever, of its own free-will, suffer punishment for its sins, just as burglars and other criminals do not voluntarily suffer punishment for their crimes such as burglary."[29]

Regarding *mukti,* Swamiji expresses the opinion that:

> Salvation believed in by the Jainees is like... a state of imprisonment. In the matter of the true conception of salvation, the Jainees have fallen into an error. The truth is that the right conception of the state of blessedness cannot be attained without a right understanding of the Veda.[30]

Swami Dayanand considers several statements in Viveksār as impossible. For example "when Mahavira was born, he bathed with water contained in 16 million of buckets."[31] Regarding the narration given in *Tattvaviveka,* Swamiji states, "It is an act of folly to regard as very exalted Mahavira who could talk of such absurd things, which are opposed to the dictates of knowledge."[32] Further in the context of pulling the hair out (*Kesha Lunchana*), Swamiji questions that in the face of this, how can the *Jainees* claim that they are merciful. The pulling out of the hair causes great pain, no matter whether the act is done by the candidate himself or by his preceptor. *Hinsā* consists in giving pain to any sentient creature.[33] Dayanand has criticised the practice of covering the mouth with a piece of cloth.[34] In the twelfth chapter of Satyarth Prakash, Swamiji has discussed *Siddhshilā* also.[35] However, he has appreciated "three good habits of the Jainas: drinking filtered water, showing mercy to tiny creatures (even though the mercy is only

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nominal) and abstaining from food at night-time. All the rest of their teachings are absurd to thoroughly incredible extent."[36]

While discussing Jainism in Satyarth Prakash, Swami Dayanand has quoted mostly from Prakaranaratnākara part I and II, Ratnasāra, Vivekasāra, Srāddhadinakṛtya, Tattvaviveka, Kalpa bhāshya, Nayacakrasāra, Aptaniścayalankāra, Arhatapravacanasāra, Paramāgamanasāra, Sūrapaṇnatī sūtra etc. It seems relevant to observe here that the study of Swamiji was very vast at the empirical level. Along with Jainism, Swamiji had made a deep study of Chārvāka, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam and other religions. Swamiji has expressed his views on non-belief in God, principle of *karma*, *Anekāntavāda* and other fundamentals. Here it seems that Swamiji had strong religions inclinations and that he had the deepest reverence for the Vedic tradition. He defined it in his own way for general welfare and along with Jainism he put a question mark on the traditional interpretation of the Vedas.

Instead of a point-by-point rebuttal of the criticism, it should suffice to make a few points. Firstly, it is erroneous to identify the Buddhists with Jainas as both have many points of philosophical and religious divergence. Secondly, it would be relevant to say here that all of Swamiji's comments were not necessarily based on a study of the philosophical works of Jainas but on some religious treatises, sagas, characters and scenarios. These treatises were written from an aesthetic point of view and contain figurative speech and similes. These should be studied keeping that in mind. It is important to point out that the Jaina philosophical treatises are devoid of these embellishments and are based more on logic and arguments which are difficult to contradict. Thirdly, due to its strong philosophical foundations, Jaina religion and philosophy have a vital presence in the society and among the thinkers, even today. Expressing a similar view, it is mentioned in *Arya Samaj kā Itihāsa* that "the Buddhists and Jainas though do not accept the Vedas but preach a life of good conduct, religious inclination, renunciation, austerity, welfare of others, which are the fundamentals of Arya Dharma."[37] It has to be granted that Jainism has ensured its existence on the basis of its principles and practices.

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# CHAPTER 47

# Buddhist Philosophy and Spirituality

*Geshe N. Samten*

I have been asked to reflect on the book entitled "Mahatma Buddha and Swami Dayanand" by Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya written on the eve of 2500th anniversary of Mahāparinirvāṇa of the Buddha celebrated by the Indian Government in 1956. In this book the author draws similarities between the Buddha and Swami Dayanand with respect to their approach to caste system, rituals, sacrifices, superstitions and other social evils against which both of them strongly raised their voice and struggled to bring transformation in social system. Caste system became deeply rooted in the Indian society among followers of the religions of Vedic tradition. Buddha rejected caste system on the ground that all sentient beings are equal and every being has the same potential to be enlightened. He condemned the practice of sacrifices slaughtering animals as means to attain salvation and fulfil wishes, as virtuous results cannot be expected by engaging in unwholesome acts which are against the law of nature. The Buddha also denounced superstitions, as such practices in the society are not only an obstacle to healthy spiritual development but also to sound social system. Swami Dayanand also strongly repudiated the caste system and animal sacrifice describing them as consequence of wrong interpretation of the Vedas for the sake of particular section of the community following the Veda. He redefined many of the mantras and reinterpreted the Vedas in order to bring justice to the society.

The author has elaborated on how the Buddha had brought a spiritual system which allowed every member of the society to participate without any discrimination. He further says that the Buddha went deeper into the causes of suffering and showed remedies. Similarly, he has made many observations. However, there are many other issues that he has brought back which had been raised by the non-Buddhist Indian philosophical schools on which debate continued for centuries with sound interactions

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between the Buddhists and other schools of Indian philosophical thought. Such sound interaction among the philosophical schools was instrumental in advancing the Indian philosophical system in general to a high level of sophistication. Both of the sides took the challenges and arguments advanced by the other side seriously and assimilated the facts into their system and went ahead with further arguments. This was a very rich tradition that prevailed in ancient India which cannot be seen anywhere. Some of the major issues, which the author has raised are – the untenability of spiritual system in Buddhism without the concept of creatorship, God; inconsistency in having a system of *karma* without believing in self, *Ātman,* on the ground that without permanent self the same person would not experience the result of the action performed earlier; and to regard life as suffering is pessimistic.

These issues have been the bone of contention among the philosophers in the past and are still being discussed and contemplated. The assumptions are built on the strong foundation of the respective philosophical systems. In order to address the issues raised by Shri Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya, it is better to have a holistic view of the system, as a partial perspective always leads to wrong perception. Therefore, I would like to make an attempt to show very briefly the system of Buddhist philosophy according to which the view of selflessness (*anātman*) is a cardinal principle of Buddhist philosophical system based on which the spiritual system demonstrates elimination of mental defilements and cultivation of mental virtues to the unlimited extend. This view of selflessness, of course, rejects the two extremes, the nihilism and reificationalism and maintains the middle view on the basis of which the whole spiritual system makes sense.

Spirituality in Buddhism is nothing but transformation of mind through thorough training and practice of meditative process of eliminating negative mental forces and cultivating the positive mental forces to the extent of limitless and perfection. The Buddha has said in a Sūtra:

The Buddhas do not wash away vicious *karmas* of beings,
Nor do they dispel their suffering with hands,
Nor do they transfer their realisation on to them,
But they liberate them by showing truth, the reality of phenomena.

Hence the entire teaching of the Buddha, which is known as *Trishiksha,* the Three Trainings, is solely grounded on the training of mind. His teachings are classified into three categories, the three baskets, the *Tripitaka*: *Vinaya pitaka, Sūtra pitaka* and *Abhidharma pitaka.* These are classified on ground of the three different contents, the *trishiksha*: *Shīla,* moral qualities, *Samādhi,* meditative stabilisation and *prajna,* wisdom. These three are inextricably related to each other that each of the earlier is the basis for the later to develop. Without proper *Shīla* or moral ethics, training in meditative stabilisation, *Samadhi* is not possible as concentration cannot be cultivated unless engagement in immoral conduct is not abstained. Without meditative stabilisation, special wisdom, *prajña* – realising the reality – cannot be developed, as powerful single pointed concentration is mandatory for it. And without the special wisdom, liberation from *samsāra* is not possible. This is how the contents of the tripitakas, the three shikshas function in the Buddhist stereological system. Thus in Buddhism, without

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undergoing through transformation of mind, seeking liberation through other means is meaningless. Shantideva has said in *Bodhicaryaavatara* (5/17):

> Those who wish to find happiness and overcome misery
> Will wander meaninglessly with no aim
> If they do not comprehend the secret of the mind –
> The paramount significance of Dharma. [1]

The *karma* relevant to birth in cyclic existence arises from afflictions, the negative mental forces, such as attachment, anger, hatred etc. The afflictions arise from conceptual thought – improperly taking things as beautiful or not beautiful. These improper mental attitudes arise from ignorance of not knowing reality of the objects one perceives. This ignorance is not simply an absence of the knowledge of reality but it perceives things diametrically opposed to reality. From this ignorance, Buddha says, the other factors instrumental in engaging in *samsāra* are given rise to. Thus the twelve limbs of 'dependent arising' in sequential order are demonstrated to show how one engages in *samsāra*: 1. ignorance, 2. action, 3. consciousness, 4. name and form, 5. the six sources, 6. contact, 7. feeling, 8. attachment, 9. grasping, 10. existence, 11. birth, and 12. aging and death. Being conditioned by *ignorance* one performs *action* and thereby gives rise to the *consciousness* of a new life in a transmigration as projected by the action. The consciousness conditions the next limb, the *name and form*. Name refers to the four aggregates: feeling, discrimination, compositional factors and consciousness and form refers to the first aggregate, form. The *six sources* are the sense powers, which mature as the form aggregate develops. *Contact* is the coming together of object, sense and consciousness. This gives rise to the next limb, *feeling* which comes from discriminating the object as pleasant, unpleasant and neutral. With this feeling one develops *attachment* and *grasping*. These give rise to the *existence*, which ensures the projection of the following life. With these strong conditions one takes, which is invariably followed by *aging and death*, the final limb.

The sequential order, how ignorance gives rise to action and action in turn gives rise to consciousness and so forth, and the reverse order, how aging and death come from birth and birth from existence and so forth are necessary to understand the twelve 'dependent arising' in terms of engagement in cyclic existence. Similarly, the sequential order, how action is ceased through the cessation of ignorance and consciousness is ceased through the cessation of action and so forth and the reverse order, how aging and death are ceased through the cessation of birth and birth is ceased through the cessation of existence are necessary to understand the twelve 'dependent arising' in terms of engagement in liberation.

The external and internal world does not exist in reality even though they appear to ordinary beings to exist in reality. This mode of perception remains until one realises the way things really are. What *is* the way that things really are and how does one *engage* with things as they really are? To completely eliminate all grasping of inner and outer phenomena as the self and as that which belongs to the self, respectively through not objectifying inner and outer phenomena is to see the way things really are. The details of the mode of engagement with the way things really are can be

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understood from the sūtras and the works of great masters. Regarding this point Candrakirti has said in his *Madhyamkavatar* (6/120):

> Seeing through wisdom that all of the afflictions and faults
> Arise from the view objectifying the transitory aggregates
> Realising that the self is the object of this view,
> The practitioner rejects such a self.

When one meditates on many general and particular evils of cyclic existence, the practitioner who aspires to engage with the way things really are, aspires to abandon such disadvantages as birth and death in *samsāra*, and aspires to abandon the afflictions such as the fault of desire. While so engaged, seeing that without undoing the cause, the effect cannot be eliminated, he then analyses, thinking "what could be the root of this *samsāra*?" On analysis, he sees that *satkayadrishti* the view of the transitory aggregates or self grasping as the root of *samsāra*, and sees that by abandoning that all of the afflictions and faults can be eliminated.

How is the view of the self-grasping to be abandoned? There are profuse logical arguments in the Sūtras and the canonical works of the masters that undermine the existence of the object that is grasped by erroneous conception. Thereby the subject's grasping is dispelled. One of the powerful logical analyses examines the self that is grasped through the view of the transitory aggregates in terms of whether it is identical to or different from the aggregates. Through dispelling the object, the grasping of the self and *being mine* are also eliminated

One cannot achieve liberation from cyclic existence by simply becoming accustomed to detaching one's mind from the self and from *being mine*, without understanding the way the self is grasped through self-grasping and the proper way to use stainless arguments to eliminate the grasped self. That is because through that practice one does not engage with the object of self-grasping or with the selflessness itself. Therefore, that practice can never undermine self-grasping at all.

Thus the practitioner, from the very beginning, seeing that the abandonment of the view of the transitory aggregates or self grasping depends on establishing the essencelessness of the object as grasped by it, and also seeing that its object is the self, analyses the self, inquiring as to whether or not the self – the object of self-grasping – exists in reality.

If the self – the object of self-grasping – existed in reality, it cannot escape two alternatives regarding its mode of existence. Thus it is to be analysed to determine whether it, through its own characteristic, is identical to, or different from the aggregates. Of identity and non-identity, when one is eliminated, the other is affirmed by that elimination. Thereby the third possibility is excluded.

According to such an analysis, if the self and the aggregates had the same nature through their own characteristics, the self would have to be arising and ceasing at each moment like the aggregates. The self is not maintained to be like that by those who subscribe to the existence of self which is substantially existent permanent entity that way, because if the self, which is the basis on which the thought "I am" arises, were

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identical to the aggregates through its own characteristic, then it would be identical to the aggregates of this life. In that case, the self would have arisen in this life despite not having existed in other lives.

Moreover, if each arising and ceasing were located at a distinct moment, they would be distinct from one another through their own characteristics. In that case it would not be possible for anyone to remember incidents of previous life and associate herself or himself to be belonging to the same continuum, because the self of that time, just like the body, would be disintegrated; and in this life the self would have arisen as different through its own characteristic.

Moreover, since there are many aggregates, there would have to be many selves. Since "self" would be merely a synonym for "aggregates" it would be senseless to assert that the self exists substantially; and the appropriated itself would be the appropriator. One would thus commit the error of asserting that the agent and action are identical. Thus, on this logical ground one develops certainty that the self and the aggregates are not inherently identical.

If the self were different from the aggregates through its own characteristic, the self would not have the characteristics – that is, arising, enduring and ceasing – which characterise the aggregates as compounded phenomena, just as a horse does not have the characteristics of a cow. In that case, there would be no self because it would not be produced, and would be like *nirvāṇa* or like a sky-flower. Such a self could be neither of the two objects of representation in self-grasping, because it is not produced.

On the other hand, the characteristics of the self would be inherently different from the characteristics of the five aggregates, including being material; experiencing; discriminating; being compounded; being conscious of each object. If one maintained that, then just as the mind is grasped as different from form, the self would be seen to be different from the aggregates. But it is not grasped like that.

Suppose it is said that this does not undermine the assertion that the self is substantially different from the aggregates. Although it is said that the self is substantially different, it is not said on the grounds that it is perceived by an innate cognitive process as it is claimed. When one does not maintain philosophy of "dependent designation", according to which the self is merely a nominal imputation, there arises inconsistency with convention.

Buddhism, which propounds selflessness as one of its most important philosophical positions, maintains that independent self with the characteristics of being permanent, substantial and self sufficient is ontologically inconsistent. So if the self existed inherently, the self and the aggregates would have to be either identical or different through their own characteristics. When both of these positions are seen to have been undermined by arguments, one develops complete certainty that the self cannot exist in reality even the slightest bit. This is to develop an understanding of the view according to which the object of self-grasping through the innate view of the transitory aggregates is unreal. However, the self, which is the basis of conventions like "I am", "I go", "I read", and so forth do exist which is nominally designated.

Not only the self of person is rejected but also the independent nature of non-sentient phenomena, which is called the self of phenomena, is also rejected on the

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same logical ground. While the philosophy of selflessness is maintained it is important to avoid the two extremes, the extreme of reification and extreme of nihilism, to understand the reality. Through this approach the philosophy of middle path is established. This is possible only when the foundation of the ontological system is 'dependent arising', which is also known as emptiness. Nagarjuna has said in his *Mulamadyamakakarika* (24/14):

For whom to whom emptiness makes sense,
Every thing makes sense.
For him to whom emptiness does not make sense,
Nothing makes sense.

Thus the philosophical implication of emptiness is not nihilistic, as many think the word suggests, rather it rejects nihilism on the ground that things are empty of independent existence, empty of true existence. According to Buddhism if things were independent they would be independent of causes and conditions, basis and designator and consequently it would not be possible for them to function in their respective manner. Therefore, the entire system of *samsāra* and *nirvāṇa* is feasible simply on the ground that they are dependently arisen and designated on their respective bases.[2]

Each of the internal and external phenomena has two natures: an ultimate and a conventional nature. The sprout, for instance, has a nature that is found by a rational cognitive process, which sees the real nature of the phenomenon as it is; and a nature that is found by a conventional cognitive process, which perceives deceptive or unreal objects. The former nature is the ultimate truth of the sprout; the latter nature is the conventional truth of the sprout.

The way in which objects are found through two different cognitive processes is as follows: The eye that is affected by cataracts sees hair falling in empty space and the eye that is not affected by cataracts does not even see the appearance of falling hair. In the same way, those who are impaired by the cataracts of ignorance see such things as the inherent existence of the aggregates. That which is seen by those buddhas who are free of the latent potentials for ignorance and by those who have the uncontaminated wisdom that sees things just as they are in virtue not being seen to be even the slightest bit dualistic, is the ultimate truth. That which is seen by those ordinary beings who are impaired by the cataracts of ignorance is the conventional truth.[3]

Just as the two truths are the foundation of Buddhist philosophy, the four seals demarcate the boundary of Buddhist philosophy. The four seals are: all compound phenomena are impermanent, all contaminated things are suffering, all phenomena are selfless and peace is nirvana. These are called the four seals because any philosophy, which claims to be a Buddhist philosophy but goes beyond any of these boundaries, loses the characteristics of being a Buddhist philosophy. These four statements not only show fundamental points of Buddhist ontological system but also reflect the fundamental points related to stereological system.[4]

The reality of impermanence is important to be realised as it plays a significant role in how we see the world as it is, in terms of being disintegrating every fraction of second. Without being able to see the compound phenomena as momentary, one

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develops attachment and aversion which lead to the growth of further negative mental element and thereby to unwholesome actions. Any thought or mental element and action arisen from ignorance grasping self are regarded to be eliminated. Hence by virtue of the nature of the causes the results are also contaminated and therefore suffering in nature. The process of twelve limbs clearly shows this system. Buddhism believes that through the realisation of the essencelessness or the selflessness, the ignorance and the afflictive mind grounded on it are eliminated. Consequently, no action leading to *samsāra* is performed. The state in which a person is free from all afflictive mind is the *nirvāṇa*.[5]

Since there was a rich tradition of investigation and analysis of inner and outer worlds in Buddhist philosophy, Buddhist logic developed as an important instrument to promote the analysis, which in turn made great contribution to the development of Indian logic in general. Besides logic, Buddhist scholars participated actively in addressing many philosophical issues interacting with other Indian schools, which tremendously enriched Indian philosophy. After the disappearance of Buddhism from the Indian plains in the twelfth century this constructive interaction among the Indian schools remained stagnated.[6]

After Buddhism was exposed to the West at a larger scale in the latter half of the 20th century, interaction between Buddhism and many other disciplines began which include physics, neuroscience, psychology, social science and Western philosophy. In the last more than two decades many serious dialogues were undertaken between leading world scientists and Buddhist scholars headed by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. This has left strong impacts on both sides that scientists are taking keen interest in Buddhist philosophy and its system of mind and mind training. Scientists are invited to the Buddhist monasteries to give courses on science and recently science has been formally made a part of the monastic curriculum. The ancient Nalanda and the other similar monastic universities like Takshashila, Odantapuri, Vikramshila took interest in all the prevalent disciplines of the time, including the secular subjects, and made significant contributions to their development. Because of the scientific approach of Buddhism in philosophy, spirituality and intellectual pursuits, and the detailed subtle account of mind and its functions, the scientists from the domain of physics, biology, neurology, neuropsychology and cognitive science are keenly interested in understanding the Buddhist systems of science of mind which is not only a rich intellectual tradition but a living tradition passed on from masters to disciples coming uninterruptedly through millennia.

The journey to total enlightenment, the Buddhahood is possible only if both of the wings of *prajna*, the wisdom and *upaya*, the skilful means are completely developed. Even compassion, love and altruism are cultivated to the fullest extent, unless the ultimate truth is realised, the journey to Buddhahood cannot be completed. Therefore, study of philosophy is not treated as mere academic exercise rather it is done as a search for truth which is mandatory for the practice of Dharma.[7]

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## NOTES AND REFERENCES

The Vedic Arya Samaji position on the issues discussed in this paper is explained in the following notes by Bhavesh Merja, meant to serve as the context:

1. On the subject of *Ātmā*, the soul, Swami Dayanand writes in the 12th chapter of Satyarth Prakash:

> The soul is immortal. The body works through its contact. When the soul leaves the body, there is left no sentience in it. If there were no soul as an entity apart from the body, whose contact would produce sentience and whose separation insentience? It must, therefore, be a distinct entity... Just as there is no content without the container, no effect without the cause, no part without the whole, and no action without the actor, similarly there can be no perception without the percipient.

Swami Dayanand holds that "The soul is a finite and eternal entity (uncreated and immortal), whose attributes are desire, aversion, pleasure, pain, etc., and whose capacity for knowledge is limited." (*Swamantavyāmantavyaprakāsh*). Swami Dayanand has further clarified in the 7th chapter of the Satyarth Prakash that the soul being invisible can be distinguished by means of its attributes. As long as the soul remains in the body, the attributes are discernible in the body; but when the soul leaves the body, they are not found in the body. A quality which exists as long as the thing exists and disappears with the disappearance of the latter belongs to that thing, e.g. the light which appears at the appearance of the lamp or the sun and disappears with their disappearance is believed to be the light of the lamp or the sun. In the same way do we have the knowledge of the existence of the soul.

Patanjali has said in Yoga-Darśana: Bhogāpavargārtham dṛśyam' (2.18), means the creation is meant for soul's *Bhoga* – experience and *Apavarga* – liberation. God, being perfect entity, doesn't need any thing for Himself. Matter, being insentient doesn't have any wish to be fulfilled. But the position of the soul is fundamentally different from God and the Matter. The soul's capacity is limited, but he is desirous to free himself from all sorts of sorrow and attain unalloyed peace and joy. So, the purpose of creation is justified only when the existence of soul is admitted in the domain of philosophy.

2. In Dayanand's conception of *karma*, the soul is the actual doer or actor, and God is the administrator of the system of justice. The soul is a conscious entity, always attempting to get rid of the sorrows and attain pleasure. God, being Omnipresent and Omniscient, witnesses all the actions of the soul and based on His eternal administration, does justice in accordance with the deeds. Whatever is wilfully done by a man, is duly witnessed by God, and reward or punishment is awarded based on the merit or demerit of the act. The soul, being fundamentally limited-knowledge is not capable to administer the system of justice, nor the matter which is devoid of consciousness can be expected to do this. Action or *karma* is also not a conscious entity. It cannot do justice by itself.

3. Swami Dayanand says that there are total three beginningless (uncreated) entities – God, the souls and *prakṛti* (the material-radica or the root-cause of the universe). They are three eternals. The attributes, functions and nature of the eternals are also eternal. He also believes that the inner self of man is the knower of truth and untruth. He says: "Truth lies in speaking, writing or believing in connection with a thing as it actually is." For the sake of discrimination between truth and untruth, he recommends five kinds of examination: (i) Compatibility with the attributes, functions and nature of God and the Vedic science, (ii) Conformability with one or all of the eight proofs, perception etc., (iii) accordance with the laws of nature, (iv) behaviour of the adepts, and (v) the purity of one's own self. These are

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five ways in which we can examine what is truth and what is untruth in order to accept truth and reject untruth. (Swamantavyāmantavyaprakāsh). Swami Dayanand has endeavoured in his books to prove the existence of above-mentioned three eternals. He believes that whatever is validly cognisable cannot be unreal or nothing, nor is it reasonable to call the finest material cause of the universe, the primordial matter non-eternal. The soul, being limited-knowledge, is subject to *Avidyā* - ignorance, which is due to a defect in the senses or in associations (education). Defective or incorrect knowledge is ignorance. The accurate or correct knowledge of a thing as it exists is knowledge in proper. Since the world and worldly objects are grasped by the sense organs, their existence cannot be denied. Similarly, the existence of God as well as the soul is also duly proved by perception and other evidences like inference, etc. To Dayanand, the universe has a conscious creator. The creator is God. It is quite evident from the design of the creation. The inert substances have no power to come intelligently together and produce desired substance such as seed etc. This shows that there must be some creator of the universe. Had there been no beginningless God, who could have created the mould of the bodies of all these creatures including humans? Without a contriver, it is not possible to create a body, completely fitted with exact number of parts, and having the capacity of functioning most appropriately. The elements which the body is made are inanimate and inert and they cannot make such a superbly designed body. They have no consciousness of organising themselves into a properly functioning body. Dayanand further says that just as an ear cannot see the shape nor an eye can perceive the sound, similarly we can perceive God only with our internal-organ (inner sense), made pure by knowledge and practices of Yoga. Just as we perceive the attributes of the earth and thereby conclude that the earth exists, similarly God is also perceived by perceiving the peculiar design of His. Besides, when a man intends to do some evil, he feels within himself fear and shame. This feeling is actuated by God. The feeling of fear, suspense etc. is so to speak the inner voice of God. This is another proof of God's existence.

4. Swami Dayanand also believes that the universe and the objects of the universe are all compound phenomena. They have been created out of the basic raw material or the material cause, and therefore, they are non-eternal, changeable and impermanent too. The basic cause of suffering is ignorance or *Avidyā*. Through true knowledge and right application, worldly objects also could be source of happiness, but the greatest and eternal source of happiness is God only. The material cause of the universe – the primordial matter and the objects formed out of it, are all devoid of consciousness or selfless. However, God and the individual soul are conscious entities, though they are not exactly identical.
5. Swami Dayanand doesn't use the term *nirvāṇa* in his works. In his philosophy, which is rooted in the Vedas, the highest state which can be accomplished by our being is emancipation, salvation or immortality, which is expressed by the terms like mukti, mokṣa, and upvarga, etc.
6. Swami Dayanand has given outstanding recognition to the six systems of Vedic philosophy. He has quoted several aphorisms of these books, with brief explanation on them in the third chapter of Satyarth Prakash, which shows his reliance on these great sūtra books. It was his intense desire to get these Darśana books translated in different languages (Updesh Manjari, 13th lecture). Because he was of the firm opinion that the knowledge contained in these books would be instrumental for mass awakening and the sure remedy for the eradication of innumerable wrong notions and fraudulent practices prevalent in the society.
7. Swami Dayanand also acknowledges the efficacy and significance of enlightenment, but in his Vedic philosophy, the individual soul is *alpajña* (अल्पज्ञ) – limited-knowledge. He is not all-knowing. He can never achieve parity to the omniscience of God. Therefore, even in his highest state of the spiritual accomplishment and evolution, he does not and cannot acquire the quality of omniscience. The soul does possess the capacity to ascertain truth, but in spite

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of that, it always remains limited-knowledge. So, in the opinion of Swami Dayanand, when a soul acquires adequate knowledge which entitles him for the fulfilment of his ultimate object of getting liberation i.e. freedom from all worldly pains and acquisition of the uninterrupted enjoyment of the unalloyed Divine bliss, it is nothing but the state of total enlightenment for the soul. In Swamantavyāmantavyaprakāsh of Satyarth Prakash, Swami Dayanand has briefly described the state of liberation and the chief means through which the same can be attained thus: "The emancipation of the soul from pain and suffering of every description and a subsequent career of freedom in the All-pervading God and His immense Creation for a fixed period of time and its resumption of earthly life after the expiration of that period constitute Salvation. The means of salvation are the worship of God, in other words, the practice of yoga, the performance of righteous deeds, the acquisition of true knowledge by the practice of Brahmacharya, the society of the wise and the learned, love of true knowledge, purity of thought, a life of activity and so on." In short, Dayanand has emphasised that through pure – unerring knowledge, pure – selfless actions and pure spiritual practices, a deserving soul makes his ultimate mission fulfilled. This is the highest aspiration of the human soul. In Dayanand's philosophy, for life's fulfilment all the three components viz. knowledge, action and worship are duly blended. In other words, both philosophy and dharma have their co-existence and due places in the Vedic science of total enlightenment.

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# CHAPTER 48

# The Message of the Vedas and the Qur'ān

*Mohd. Hanif Khan Shastri*

Sūraḥ Āl-i-'Imrān from the Holy Qur'ān[1] gives the following instruction:

*Qul yaa Ahlal Kitaabi ta'aalaw ilaa Kalimatin,*
*sawaaa'im bainanaa wa bainakum allaa na'buda illal laaha.*[2]

Meaning: (O Prophet! tell) Those who have a scripture, come all of you and unanimously agree that there are common things in our scripture and your scriptures, and in all the scriptures the same thing has been said – that there is only one God who is worshipped. God may be known by different names in various languages but He is One – the all pervasive God.

***The One God***

In my research thesis on Mahāmantra Gāyatrī from the Veda and Sūraḥ Fātiḥa from the Holy Qur'ān, I have given evidence that the word 'Allāh' of Sanskrit is the same as that in Arabic. It is *Al+Elah = Allah* in Arabic. In Sanskrit, it is *Al+Eel+Ah* and *Al+La+Ah = Allah.* Allah means the same in both the languages that is, the one to be venerated. The other meaning is – Al = whole, La = the Giver, the One who knows all and the One who has power over everyone. This derivation of Allah in Sanskrit is available in the *Kaustubha* dictionary. As this derivation has been done by sage Pāṇini, it therefore predates the Holy Qur'ān. Moreover, the name of Prophet Mohammed Sahib's father was Abdullah, which literally means the servant of God. So the Prophet is telling the misguided people who have come away from the shelter of God that he is speaking of the same Allah whom they already know. In Sanskrit too, the meaning (in Vedic language) of *Eel* (used earlier) is the venerable. Its usage can be seen in the Ṛgveda:

*Agnimīle purohitaṁ yajñasya devamṛtvijam,*
*Hotāraṁ ratnadhātamam.*[3]

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In this first mantra of the Ṛgveda, the objective is that we should worship God which is All-glorious and manifested in fire (light). In Sanskrit, the beautiful, attractive and short name of the Almighty God is ॐ (AUM). If we modify ॐ (AUM) slightly, then it becomes the Arabic (الله) Allah.

The underlying meaning is that *Parameśvara* and Allah are one and the same. The Nāsdīya sūkta of the Ṛgveda says:

*Nāsadāsīnno sadāsīttadānīṁ nāsīdrajo no vyomā paro yat,*
*Kimāvarīvaḥ kuha kasya śarmannambhaḥ kimāsīdgahanaṁ gabhīram.*[4]

It is clear, therefore, in *pralaya* there was no *sat,* there was no *asat* and there was no *loka* (universe) whatever is beyond the *ākāśa* (sky) did not exist. What was then there that covered everything? Where was the fathomless water? At the time of *pralaya,* there were no *pañcabhūta* (*sat*) or nothingness (*asat*), then who covered whom?

The answer to this complicated question is given in the subsequent verses of the same sūkta and is also available in the Holy Qur'ān:

*Huwal Awwalu wal'Aakhiru,*
*waz Zaahiru wal Baatinu wa huwa bikulli shai'in Aleem.*[5]

Meaning: Allah was Supreme and when there was nothing it was only He and in the end when there will be nothing it will be He. He is the First, the Last, the All-Outward, and the All-Inward. He was there before the universe, He is there today and He is eternal. He is immortal, un-decaying and indeclinable. He is the one who is always new and He is the one who will always be there.

This *Praṇava* – God who loves His creation, the human beings – has given the great treatise known as the Veda on the art of living.

Manusmriti is right in saying, *Vedo'khilo dharmamūlam*[6] meaning that the Veda is the essence or the root of all *dharma.* The Holy Qur'ān is the living proof of this. In the Sūraḥ Fuṣṣilat, there is explicit proof of the above and it is said thus:

*Maa yuqaalu laka illaa maa qad qeela lir Rusuli min qablik.*[7]

Meaning: O Rasool! Nothing new is being said, whatever has already been said is being repeated. With this assertion, it is clear that the same things are being reiterated about God which have already been said through the medium of the Vedas. The obvious needs no proof!

Let us see one by one, the same in the Holy Qur'ān what has already been said in the Vedas.

***Similar Descriptions of God in the Veda and the Holy Qur'ān***

The first mantra of *Hiraṇyagarbha sūkta* in the 10th mandal of the Ṛgveda is:

*Hiraṇyagarbhaḥ samavartatāgre bhūtasya jātaḥ patireka āsīt,*
*Sa dādhāra pṛthivīm dyāmutemāṁ kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema.*[8]

Meaning: He is the Lord of creation including water and bodies of all beings. He, who is the master of all, who established the earth below and the sky above, should be worshipped and all should be dedicated to that Almighty.

The same has been said in the Holy Qur'ān in the following words:

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*Awalam yaral lazeena kafarooo annas samaawaati wal arda kaanataa ratqan faftaqnaahumaa wa ja'alnaa minal maaa'i kulla shai'in haiyin afalaa yu'minoon.*[9]

Meaning: The non-believers who deny the existence of God do not know that the earth and sky were one in essence, in the causal form, we have established the land below and the sky above and all the living beings were given birth from water.

We observed that the first mantra of *Hiraṇyagarbha sūkta* of the Rgveda apprised humanity *Kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema.*[10] In colloquial Sanskrit कस्मै (*Kasmai*) means 'whose' but in Vedic Sanskrit 'क' (*Ka*) means the Blissful Almighty God. The rishis have deeply contemplated over the Vedas. The learned rishis, after deepest meditation and in full consonance with the Almighty, presented the world with the Veda mantras. In this sequence, the second mantra deserves attention:

*Ya ātmadā baladā yasya viśva upāsate praśiṣaṁ yasya devāḥ,*
*Yasya chāyāmṛtaṁ yasya mṛtyuḥ kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema.*[11]

Meaning: The same *parameśvara* is the giver of spiritual knowledge and life and He is the one who gives strength to the individual and the whole universe. All the divine powers in their various manifestations, all of them like good students worship the same divine God and life and death of all human beings is in the hands of the same Supreme One. Dedicate your all to the same Almighty and worship Him.

In a different context, the Holy Qur'ān has reverberated the same in Sūraḥ Al-Ḥadīd:

*Sabbaha lillaahi maa fissamaawaati wal ardi wa Huwal 'Azeezul Hakeem,*
*Lahoo mulkus samaawaati wal ardi yuhyee wa yumeetu wa Huwa 'alaa kulli shai'in Qadeer.*[12]

Meaning: All the beings on the earth and in the heaven perpetually pray to the same God. Everybody's life and death is in His hands. He is the owner of all countries of the world. He is redoubtable (महापराक्रमी) and omnipotent (so worship Him devoting everything).

In Kenopaniṣad, we come across the following description of God:

*Yaccakṣuṣa na paśyati yain cakṣunsi paśyati,*
*Tadev brahma tvam viddhi nedam yaditvamupaste.*[13]

He is not visible to the eye, in fact we can see only because of Him. Make a note. He is the formless God.

Exactly this has been reiterated in the Sūraḥ Al-An'ām of the Holy Qur'ān:

*Laa tudrikuhul absaaru*
*wa Huwa yudrikul absaara*
*wa huwal Lateeful Khabeer.*[14]

Meaning: The eyes do not see Him; on the contrary the eyes can see because of Him. The same Allah being all-pervading has the penetrating eye and He keeps track of everybody.

Thus it becomes clear from a study of the Veda and the Holy Qur'ān that both declare that He is the owner of the whole universe, He is the birth-giver, the One. He nurtures and gives positions and prestige. But to serve their own ends, the rudderless human beings towards their selfish ends, have given multifarious identities and thus got divided with their own brethren and have turned into enemies.

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The message of the Vedas is universal and relevant at all times, in all situations. But as has been said, "we have ourselves stubbed the light." We, the Indians have not been able to take to one and all, the unprecedented and universally beneficial message of this divine revelation, a sublime treasure, and a divine blessing for all. In fact this divine treasure has been much neglected for many millennia. But because it is a divine treasure, the Almighty kept it safely with Him for thousands of years because He knows that at the appropriate time, it will shine once again.

Let us look at a few more examples of the common messages of the Vedas and the Holy Qur'ān.

***God's Administration***

As has already been said, 'I am not saying anything new but am only repeating what the earlier Prophets have said'. In the same sequence, Allah through An-Naml has referred to His administration:

*Sun'al laahil lazeee atqana kulla shai'; innahoo khabeerum bimaa taf'aloon.*[15]

Meaning: Allah in His wisdom has very competently administrated the whole universe and He keeps track of everyone.

An explanation of this is available in the Ṛgveda:

*Tvayā hitamapyamapsu bhāgaṁ dhanvānvā mrgayaso vi tasthuḥ,*
*Vanāni vibhyo nakirasya tāni vratā devasya saviturminanti.*[16]

Meaning: O Almighty! Your organisation of the whole world is unique. You have made the firmament and forests for the birds. For those who live in water, organisation has been made accordingly. All arrangements have been made in the forest for those who live in the forest. None is dependent on anyone for his needs nor does anyone interfere with anyone else's life.

Thus, O God! The creator of this universe, none has the courage to thwart your bidding, your rules and administration.

*Na yasendro varuṇo na mitro vratamaryamā na minanti rudraḥ,*
*Nārātayas-tamidaṁ svasti huve devaṁ savitāraṁ namobhiḥ.*[17]

This Veda mantra says: O Creator of the universe! None has the courage to thwart what you have ordained. Alternatively it can be said that none can do otherwise. We salute such an All-powerful Deva.

There is a reference about the same in the Holy Qur'ān, Sūraḥ-Kahf:

*Watlu maaa oohiya ilaika min Kitaabi Rabbika,*
*laa mubaddila li Kalimaatihee.*[18]

Meaning: O Nabi! Whatever is said in Allah's book should be literally conveyed to the people. No one dare interfere with what the Lord has enjoined.

All this pertains to the worldly organisation of Allah and his strictness about it. Now we should see his piety, compassion, love and other human values in the context of Holy Qur'ān and the Vedas.

***Human Values in the Veda and the Holy Qur'ān***

The Ṛgveda has the following instruction for human beings:

*Pumānpumānsaṁ pari pātu viśvataḥ.*[19]

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Meaning: Every human being should help and protect his fellow beings in every way.

In this mantra, there is an explicit perception of the universal large heartedness which transcends space and time as well as extreme sympathy and piety. The question arises as to why this preaching enjoins upon human beings the path of brotherhood and empathy till eternity. We find the mystery solved in the Holy Qur'ān, because in An-Nisāa it is explicitly said:

*Yaaa aiyuhan naasut taqoo Rabbakumul lazee khalaqakum min nafsinw waahidatinw wa khalaqa minhaa zawjahaa wa bas sa minhumaa rijaalan kaseeranw wa nisaaa'aa; wattaqul laahallazee tasaaa 'aloona bihee wal arhaam; innal laaha kaana 'alaikum Raqeeba.*[20]

It means: O Human Beings! Be afraid of God who has given life to both you and your wife. Then this same husband and wife produced men and women in the whole world. In the name of God, you get work out of one another. Therefore you are all brothers; do not spoil the relationship. Believe me God keeps a constant vigil on you.[21]

Perceiving the similarity between the thought of the Holy Qur'ān and the Vedas from the above mantra the spontaneous response is, surely our God is one and we are all His sons and daughters!

There are numerous such messages and preachings in the Vedas and the Holy Qur'ān which complement each other. The Holy Qur'ān is fourteen centuries old and today its teachings have spread to every corner of the world. Though according to the Holy Qur'ān itself, it is not saying anything new but only carrying forward the Vedic teachings. For example, we can see that for the last fourteen-hundred years Namaz is being offered in all corners of the world whereas the word Namaz has been derived from the Sanskrit word *Namas* and in Arabic it is known as *Salat.* Its literal meaning is complete surrender before the Master, of everything like honour, fame, wealth and further whatever has been granted by God like kingdoms and all worldly possessions. So that at the time of death, one may remember only the Master and His protection should be always available. In this exercise, a straight forward plea is made to the Creator *ih'dina siratal mustaqim.*[22] "O God! Lead us on the simple and problem free path so that it takes us straight to your shelter.

Before this prayer, the devotee places all the adulation before the Master – which is His reality *Al- Hamdu Lillah-A Rbbil Almin*[23] meaning: All worth praising, all qualities and miracles are His, who looks after all. His case is not like that of a rich man who gives bread to the deprived or slaves, on the contrary as is being said further *Ar-Rahmaanir-Raheem*[24] He is extremely kind and full of compassion who with extreme love feeds every being in the world what that being needs, like for example, He does not give grass to a lion, who eats meat. The benign Lord on the day of final reckoning will ask us to account for the bounties that He gave the human beings by way of elements of nature and other faculties like our mind, eyes, and other limbs. He will ask if we made proper use of these, because during our life time, we were given full freedom to live the way we wanted. Therefore He is within His right to ask for a final reckoning. He is the master of that day. He is justice personified.

Therefore in Namaz, the humans pray, "O God! We worship only You and need only Your help." The same has been said in the Ṛgveda, as enshrined in Sāvitrī mantra *Dhīmahi Dhiyo*[25] "O God! I constantly concentrate on You." Further, it has been said in

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Gāyatrī mantra – *Dhiyo yo naḥ pracodayāt,*[26] meaning – motivate us, our intellect and actions towards dharma, duty, deliverance and the right path. The same is reiterated in Arabic *ih'dina siratal mustaqim.* The devotee further prays "make us tread the straight path – as You have always been happy with those who tread the straight path and have rewarded them. In Arabic it is called *Siratll Jean Anamt Alai Him.*[27]

What is that noble path, which pleases the Almighty? The Ṛgveda explains:

*Svasti panthāmanu carema sūryācandramasāviva,*
*Punardadatāghnatā jānatā saṁ gamemahi.*[28]

Meaning: We should tread the path of goodness. We will have to ponder as to what is the path of goodness. If that path is difficult, expensive, hazardous and replete with hurdles, then such a path should be abandoned because this cannot be the path of welfare. On the contrary, the desirable path will be the one which is straight, comfortable, unhindered so that we can attain our goal.

In the Namaz, the devotee always prays – O God! Make us tread the same path which has been followed by those with whom You have always been pleased and whom You have rewarded. This prayer finds a beautiful echo in the Veda mantra quoted above – *Sūryā candramasāviva* i.e., when the sun and the moon tread their path, it brings welfare not only to the human beings but to the whole universe. Those who offer Namaz should learn that like the sun and the moon, they too should try, according to their means, to benefit the society. We get the same teaching from *Punardadatāghnatā jānatā saṁ gamemahi* in the Veda mantra quoted above. It means: Let us follow the path of peace, progress and well-being like the sun and moon, moving forward with men of knowledge and self-awareness, giving, receiving and giving again, in our orbit without hurting others and encroachment on the rights of others, at the same time maintaining our own identity.[29] This will definitely translate *Sarve bhavantu sukhinaḥ*[30] into a reality.

Further, we must learn that in our prayers we should not only pray *siratal mustaqim*[31] but learn to tread the virtuous path *siratal mustaqim* like the Sun and the Moon, only then we will be called true Muslims, the ones who obey their Master, the God.

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2. *Holy Qur'ān,* Sūraḥ Āl-i-'Imrān, Āyat 3.64; कुल् या अहलल्–किताबि तआलौ इला कलि–मतिन् सवा–इम् बैनना व बैनकुम् अल्ला नअ़बु–द इल्लल्ला–ह।।
3. *Ṛgveda,* 1.1.1; अग्निमीले पुरोहितं यज्ञस्य देवमृत्विजम्। होतारं रत्नधातमम्।।
4. *Ibid.,* 10.129.1; नासदासीन्नो सदासीत्तदानीं नासीद्रजो नो व्योमा परो यत्। किमावरीवः कुह कस्य शर्मन्नम्भः किमासीद्गहनं गभीरम्।।
5. *Holy Qur'ān,* Sūraḥ Al-Ḥadīd, 57.3; हुवल्–अव्वलु वल्–आख़िरु वज़्ज़ाहिरु वल्–बातिनु व हु–व बिकुल्लि शैइन् अ़लीम।।
6. *Manusmriti,* 2.6; वेदोऽखिलो धर्ममूलम्
7. *Holy Qur'ān,* Sūraḥ Fuṣṣilat, 41.43; मा युक़ालु ल–क इल्ला मा क़द् क़ी–ल लिर्रुसुलि मिन् क़ब्लि–क।
8. *Ṛgveda,* 10.121.1; हिरण्यगर्भः समवर्तताग्रे भूतस्य जातः पतिरेक आसीत्। स दाधार पृथिवीं द्यामुतेमां कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम।।

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9. *Holy Qur'ān,* Sūraḥ Al-Anbiyāa, 21.30; अ–व लम् यरल्लज़ी–न क–फ़रू अन्नस्समावाति वल्अर्–ज़ कानता रत्क़न् फ़–फ़तक़्नाहुमा, व जअ़ल्ना मिनल्मा–इ कुल्–ल शैइन् हय्यिन् अ–फ़ला युअ्मिनून।
10. *Ṛgveda,* 10.121.1; कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम।
11. *Ṛgveda,* 10.121.2; य आत्मदा बलदा यस्य विश्व उपासते प्रशिषं यस्य देवाः। यस्य छायामृतं यस्य मृत्युः कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम।"
12. *Holy Qur'ān,* Sūraḥ Al-Ḥadīd, 57.1-2; सब्ब–ह लिल्लाहि मा फ़िस्समावाति वल्अर्ज़ि व हुवल् अ़ज़ीज़ुल्–हकीम्। लहू मुल्कुस्समावाति वल्अर्ज़ि यूहयी व युमीतु व हु–व अ़ला कुल्लि शैइन् क़दीर।।
13. *Kenopaniṣad,* 1.6; यच्चक्षुषा न पश्यति येन चक्षूँषि पश्यति। तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते।।
14. *Holy Qur'ān,* Sūraḥ Al-An'ām, 6.103; ला तुद्रिकुहुल्–अब्सारू, व हु–व युद्रिकुल–अब्सा–र, व हुवल् लतीफ़ुल्–ख़बीर।।
15. *Ibid.,* Sūraḥ An-Naml, 27.88; सुन्–अ़ल्लाहिल्लज़ी अत्क़–न कुल्–ल शैइन्, इन्नहु ख़बीरूम् बिमा तफ़्अ़लून।
16. *Ṛgveda,* 2.38.7; त्वया हितमप्यमप्सु भागं धन्वान्वा मृगयसो वि तस्थुः। वनानि विभ्यो नकिरस्य तानि व्रता देवस्य सवितुर्मिनन्ति।।
17. *Ibid.,* 2.38.9; न यस्येन्द्रो वरुणो न मित्रो व्रतमर्यमा न मिनन्ति रुद्रः। नारातयस्तमिदं स्वस्ति हुवे देवं सवितारं नमोभिः।।
18. *Holy Qur'ān,* Sūraḥ Al-Kahf, 18.27; वत्लु मा ऊहि–य इलै–क मिन् किताबि रब्बि–क, ला मुबद्दिल–ल लि–कलिमातिही।।
19. *Ṛgveda,* 6.75.14; पुमान्पुमांसं परि पातु विश्वतः।।
20. *Holy Qur'ān,* Sūraḥ An-Nisāa, 4.1; या अय्युहन्नासुत्तकू रब्बकुमुल्लज़ी ख़–ल–क़कुम् मिन् नफ़्सिंव्वाहि–दतिंव्–व ख़–ल–क़ मिन्हा ज़ौजहा व बस्स मिन्हुमा रिजालन् कसीरंव्–व निसाअन्, वत्तकुल्लाहल्लज़ी तसाअलू–न बिही वल्अर्हा–म, इनल्ला–ह का–न अ़लैकुम् रक़ीबा।
21. In Vedic tradition, it is believed that God created many men and women in the beginning, which were deserving on account of their previous good actions, to be borne in this first *Aishwari* - Divine creation (Editor).
22. इह दिना सिरातल मुस्तकीम।
23. अल्ए रब्बिल आलमीन -हम्दु लिल्लाह -
24. *Holy Qur'ān,* Sūraḥ Al-Fātiḥa, 1.3; अर्रहमा निर्रहीम
25. *Ṛgveda,* 3.62.10; धीमहि धियो
26. *Ibid.*; धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात्
27. सिरातल्ल जीन अनअमत् अलै हिम
28. *Ṛgveda,* 5.51.15; स्वस्ति पन्थामनु चरेम सूर्याचन्द्रमसाविव। पुनर्ददताघ्नता जानता सं गमेमहि।।
29. Tulsi Ram, Dr., 2013, *Ṛgveda Bhashya,* Arsh Sahitya Prachar Trust, Delhi, p. 443.
30. सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः
31. सिरातल मुस्तकीम

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# CHAPTER 49

# Swami Dayanand's Contemporaneity*

*Sutinder Singh Noor*

For me, Swami Dayanand Saraswati is important not only because of his significant role in history, rather, because of his contemporaneity; how his *Shastrarths* and discourses are most needed to solve the problems of our age, to restructure the base of our society, religion and our culture. We have already destroyed the structure of our society; we are living without any hermeneutics of religion, without any existential meaning; we are living in a chaos. The West is advocating that we have reached the post-modern era, the age of globalisation. But when we examine our own situation, we find that we are ignorant still, about the signifiers of our own culture and new knowledge. We are losing grip and the understanding of our own philosophic heritage and our own texts.

For me, this is important to how I read Swami Dayanand's life and teachings, because I am a student of Indian classical texts, *Gurbani* and contemporary literary theory. All these disciplines have created my interest in Swamiji.

Swami Dayanand did not accept the Puranas beyond the world of mythology. For him, the Vedas are the real knowledge, the way of life and the philosophy of faith. He believed in the experiential interpretation. That is why he left his home. He experienced difficulties and a thorny way of life. For him, knowledge of the ultimate truth was important. Continuously, he attacked idol worship. He rejected the fanatic ritualism of those Brahamans who did not know the real philosophy and meaning of the Vedas. He created the process of revolution against this kind of religion and fanaticism. These idol worshippers attacked him several times, but he had faith in God and achieved his goal, established the Arya Samaj and other educational institutions to make the people more conscious, more cultural and committed to the Indian tradition and way of life.

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The message of *Gurbani* has made me more conscious about the real preachings of Swami Dayanand also. Kabir, in *Adi-Granth* has said:

"Call not Vedas and Koran false; the one who has not contemplated these is false."

Kabir, again in *Adi-Granth,* has said about idol worship:

> "Some buy God's figures to worship
> And in stubbornness of will, visit the bathing spots
> In imitation of others, such assume poses,
> And are strayed.
> Says Kabir: over the whole world those who worship stone as God,
> In such belief shall sink in mid-stream."

When I understand the contemporary literary theory, I find significant, the dialogic theory of the Russian scholar Bakhtin. For him, the dialogue between texts, between ideologies or the inner dialogue which a text creates, is most important.

The other debate about the method of 'Discourse' in literary theory and philosophy reminds me about *Shastrarth* or the religious discourse of Swami Dayanand. This discourse is not a religious discourse only; it is ethical and cultural too. The power of language captures the mind of people. A new kind of awakening occurs.

This awakening also occurs when we study his concept of *Varnashrama.* J.T.F. Jordens has said in his book *Dayanand Saraswati*:

> Denying any validity to the caste divisions of Hindu society, he replaced them by his system of the four classes, allocated not by the accident of birth, but by the state according to each man's abilities and behaviour. By ascribing to the classes of purely secular status, he took away from the *shastras* that the religious authority in caste matters, that orthodoxy had to be judged from the ethical point of view.[1]

Swami Dayanand also declared that shudras, as human beings, have every right to study the Vedas. Now, when our society is facing the caste problem in a very dangerous way, the message of Swami Dayanand is very significant, with which we can solve the crisis.

How Swami Dayanand attacked idol worship, sectarianism and the superstitious beliefs and practices – we can study in all his discourses and Satyarth Prakash,[2] especially in his *Pakhand Khandan* or *Bhagwat Khandan*[3] and *Advaitmat Khandan.*[4]

Swami Dayanand was a rational scholar. When he examined Koran and Bible, he studied the inner-contradictions of the texts. He was not against Muslims and Christians. But he did not like Islam's bias in favour of the Muslims, war, plunder and slaughter of non-believers. Jordens believes that his attitude towards Christians in general was more moderate, though during his visit to the Punjab, the missionaries were his prime target. But the important thing is his method of *shastrarth.* With missionaries and Muslim scholars he created a dialogue, a rational dialogue. The

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prominent Christians, Muslims and Sikhs became his friends. He stayed with them. Ideologically, he discussed his concept of '*Dharma*' with them.

Swami Dayanand's interest in grammar was also a significant aspect. On several occasions during his *shastrarth*, he enquired of the other person if he knew grammar. The scholars who did not know grammar were not fit for the rational debate, because they were unable to understand the semantics of religious text or the other problems of meaning and stylistics. Now, in contemporary times when we are conscious about the great grammarian *Pāṇini* or the linguists like Saussure or Chomsky, we understand more deeply, why Swami Dayanand stresses upon the knowledge of grammar. His *Vedāṅga Prakash* analyses the problems of grammar in fourteen chapters. His *Vākya-Parbodh*,[5] *Ṛgvedādibhāshya-bhūmikā*[6] and *Vedabhāshya*[7,8] are studies in the same paradigm.

Swami Dayanand's concept of *Dharma* has combined this kind of cognition of religion and grammar. And such a combination is very rare. We find it only in the real oriental *Rishis*. That is why Swami Dayanand believes in the real *Rishis* and also in the text created by the *Rishis*, not by ordinary scholars. This distinctive personality of Swamiji makes him significant in our contemporary crises and we must understand him more consciously.

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* Reproduced, with minor grammatical modifications, from *Swami Dayanand Man, Message and Mission*, Dharma Pratishthan, 7 Jantar Mantar, New Delhi (2005), courtesy Swami Aginvesh.


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3. Dayanand Saraswati, 1983, *Bhāgwat Khaṇḍan*, Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Bahalgarh, Sonepat
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7. Dayanand Saraswati, 1972, *Yajurvedabhāshyam*, Vaidik Yantralaya, Ajmer
8. Dayanand Saraswati, *Ṛgvedabhāshyam*, Vaidik Yantralaya, Ajmer


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# CHAPTER 50

# The Spiritual Genius of Swami Dayanand*

*Rev. Valson Thampu*

I share a great conviction as well as a deep concern.

First, the conviction. I am convinced that in Maharshi Dayanand we had a rare spiritual genius whose vision and mission represented an unprecedented spiritual stirring in the Indian context. I am equally convinced that reviving the spiritual essence of this movement is the imperative of the moment for those who care for the Arya Samaj as well as those interested in fulfilling the spiritual destiny of India for the sake of the world at large. The Arya Samaj, in its authentic version, is an effective antidote to the spiritual decay and directionlessness that we see around us in the form of communalism, casteism, and religious obscurantism, all of which blacken the face of India and suffocate her true greatness.

Second, the concern, which is born out of the following conviction. Sadly, the Arya Samaj, over the last century, has drifted away from its spiritual wellsprings. It seems to have squandered its uniqueness and lost its zealous sense of mission. This unique movement appears to have been overtaken by those very forces it was meant to fight and eradicate from the spiritual geography of India. Let us consider only three pointers in this regard.

The prime spiritual agenda of the movement; namely, to rid the Indian society of caste and superstition and to increase the stock of its nobility, is all but forgotten. The intellectual and cultural vitality that it awakened in our society seems to be no longer the forte of the movement.

Several of the outstanding Hindu leaders and thinkers that I come across are, sadly, ex-Arya Samajis. The Samaj did a great service to our country in the past by catalysing an intellectual and spiritual effervescence in the stagnant pool of Indian religiosity. One wonders, if this is still the case.

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The third is even more important than the first two, and might well be the source of both. And that is the noticeable escapist character that seems to have enfeebled the Arya Samaj movement at the present time. To see this state of affairs in the right perspective, we need to reckon the difference between mere religiosity and true spirituality. Religiosity, at all times, is vulnerable to escapism. It is driven, by and large, by sanctified selfishness that remains over-eager to keep God well-humoured with the twin intention of maximising divine favour and minimising divine displeasure.

Such religiosity is essentially mercenary and transactional, driven by calculations of worldly profit and loss. It is not marked by an eagerness to engage the world of realities in order to make spiritual values prevail in society. Spirituality is the exact opposite of this. It is an engagement with the realities of the given context, shaped by something higher than personal or mercenary interests. That is why universal values like love, compassion, truth and justice are basic to spirituality, whereas in the context of mere religiosity, we may pay only lip-service to them, if at all.

If Swami Dayanand were only one among the many religious leaders that this country produced, he would not have been a reformer and social activist. He would not have been, without a doubt, the spiritual giant he proved to be. Why do I consider Dayanand to be a spiritual genius? First of all, he represented the triumph of reason in religion. Contrary to popular assumption, reason is the light of true religion. Only those who are spiritually illiterate see reason and faith as opposites. They are, instead, the two horses that pull the chariot of spirituality. Reason and faith are the sun and the moon of spirituality. Like the moon, faith needs to derive its light from the sun of reason. Faith accesses truths and insights that belong to the realm of revelation, which is the highest reach of reason. But the harvest of revelation has to be digested in the stomach of faith and absorbed through the capillaries of reason. What is not reasonable should have no place in the repertoire of religion. If this is not insisted on, religion will regress quickly into blind faith, superstition and obscurantism. Blind faith is that which makes us blind; it is a disservice to humankind.

Maharshi Dayanand is a role model for all those who take their religions seriously and honestly. How many young, religious men might have seen, well before Maharshi Dayanand, rats eating the food offered to idols at night! Why didn't any of them have the courage or freedom of the spirit to read and pursue its meaning to its logical conclusion? Very likely, they were blinded by their orthodox religious conditioning and were disabled from thinking rationally. Spirituality gives us courage, as it did to Dayanand, to break out of the prison of blind faith and to exercise the God-given capacity for reasoning and analysis, which is the secret of our inner freedom. If this spiritual duty is not fully exercised, we shall be a party to turning religion into an instrument of exploitation rather than an agent of liberation and empowerment.

The foremost interest of the present author, as a practitioner of a different faith, in the spiritual genius of Dayanand is that his teachings are conducive, if taken in the right spirit and practised in earnest, to authentic individuality. The problem with religious orthodoxy - this applies to all religions - is that it promotes conformity to orthodoxy as the foremost religious virtue. This causes an atrophy, both of the intellect and the initiative of individuals. The more religious a person is, in this fashion, the

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more hollow and anaemic he tends to be. Dayanand challenged people to think, to use their full faculties and to emerge into the fullness of their being. This is a profound service to humanity! All the more so at the present time, as mindless conformity has become a contemporary epidemic today in all walks and aspects of life. I believe it is less harmful to be irreligious than to be intellectually crushed under the deadweight of mere orthodoxy. I have sensed, in every person nourished in the authentic Arya Samaj tradition, a certain freedom of the spirit and personal stature, which is greatly to be cherished.

Secondly, every genuine spiritual leader has also been a religious reformer. In the sphere of religion there are two types of leaders. We are mostly familiar with religious leaders as the custodians of orthodoxy and status quo. Their agenda is to support and legitimise – overtly or covertly – the existing power structures, from which they benefit, one way or another. They don't have much use for rational thinking, and are often indifferent to values like truth, justice and compassion. They are so keen to protect, preserve and glorify the mechanism of religion that they become blind to the meaning of religion. They mistake the religious establishment for God. Mercifully, there is another type of leadership, even if this is rarer than the first. To them, religion is a call to know and honour God. They experience God as values: values like universal brotherhood, truth, love, compassion and justice. Their prime agenda is not to turn God into a milk cow for material gains but to exalt God as an invitation for celebrating the best in our humanity, at the individual and social levels. This makes them particularly concerned about decay in the spiritual core of their religious tradition, which happens in every religion. In its march through history, every religion suffers a gradual alienation from its spiritual core. Over a period of time, a religion becomes a contradiction of its spirituality. Maharshi Dayanand was particularly appalled by the gulf between the Vedic vision and popular Hinduism. So he arrived on the scene with the spiritual battle cry, 'Back to the Vedas'. Even if he had done nothing else, this initiative by itself would have established his credentials as a man with an authentic spiritual mission.

Maharshi Dayanand is eternally and universally relevant as a case study in responsible and wholesome religiosity. How are we to express our love and respect for our religious tradition? The crass foolishness that we can serve our religion and honour God by hating others and spilling blood is gaining ground everywhere. This works at the perverse root of global terrorism as well as of every communal agenda. Dayanand points to a different horizon altogether. When it comes to religion, "offence" is the worst defence. The best defence is reform aimed at fulfilling the hidden, inexhaustible spiritual scope of one's religious tradition. It is by celebrating the true glory of a tradition that it is defended best. To see this truth, two things are necessary: (a) one must know one's religion deeply and (b) one must have confidence in the eternal relevance of that tradition. Maharshi Dayanand exemplifies both. His war cry (if the expression be pardoned) was not "Attack other faiths". It was "Back to the Vedas!" That is a million times more powerful than spewing venom on other faiths.

Of course, a spiritual leader is not obliged to remain blind to what is rotten in other religions, which Maharshi Dayanand was not. But his concern, first and foremost,

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was to reform his own religion, which Dayanand did with an exemplary sense of purpose.

At this point we must make a distinction that is crucial to understanding the significance of Dayanand's spiritual mission. His greatest contribution to the world of spirituality was not that he reformed Hinduism. It was that *he was a clarion call to reform the idea of religion itself.* It was this, and not his hostility to other religions, that made Dayanand criticise all of them. From an ideal standpoint, all religions fall short of their spiritual norms and goals. So, there is a need for believers in every religion to be critically vigilant about the way their religions are understood and practised. This capacity for self-criticism proves the health and robustness of a religion.

Intolerance to responsible criticism, on the other hand, is a pointer to the decay that has set into a religion. The spiritual discipline that Dayanand has evolved – to doubt, to debate and, if need be, to dissent – is worthy of universal acceptance. As a rule, communal elements are incapable of self-criticism and, precisely for that reason, are trigger-happy in criticising others. From a spiritual point of view, though, the capacity for self-criticism is what comprises the authority one has to criticise other religions as well. "First remove," Jesus said, "the beam in your own eye; then you shall see clearly the mote in your brother's eye." Spirituality does not desist from judging others, but makes sure that judgments are based on truth and not on prejudice, ignorance and ill-will. In Dayanand, judgment does not degenerate into judgmentalism.

A third aspect of the spirituality of a true religious leader is the keenness to liberate and empower the victims of a society. Spirituality is clarion call to freedom. It understands freedom not only as "freedom from" but also as "freedom for". To Dayanand, spirituality was nothing if not an agenda of human liberation and ennoblement. And it is in this respect that he found caste-ridden Hinduism woefully wanting. To him there was an innate connection between idol worship and casteism, which we shall consider presently.

Dayanand's spiritual mission was inspired by a unique conviction about the incomparable worth of every human being as a creation of God. It was this that provoked his righteous indignation against caste oppression, sati, and the destitution of Hindu widows. He realised at once that caste, which condemned millions on the basis of the accident of their birth, was the darkest blot on the Vedic faith. To him, all human beings are equal by birth. Everyone is born a Shudra and it is the right and duty of every human being to grow out of this state of spiritual under-development. Though born Shudras, none of us is meant to stay in the Shudra-state; we are required to evolve towards nobility. The business of religion is to help people in their pilgrimage from their Shudra plight to their Arya (or noble) destiny. This is the saga of spirituality and nothing that dodges or denies this fundamental human need, or spiritual thirst, should be tolerated in the sphere of religion.

From my perspective as a Christian theologian, it is in this respect that the vision of Dayanand is closest to that of Jesus Christ. The emphasis in the spiritual vision of both falls squarely on the sanctity of growth. "Be thou perfect," Jesus said, "even as God is perfect." Substitute the word "perfect" with "noble" (or Arya), you are with Dayanand! This is the core business of spirituality, universally. Whatever facilitates the growth and

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sustains the life of human beings is sacred. That is why, for instance, rivers are sacred. Rivers sustain life. Most regrettably, the custodians and wholesalers of oppressive religiosity create stumbling blocks in the path of human development and welfare. That is the curse writ large over casteism. I believe that if Maharshi Dayanand's agenda of ennobling every human being had been pursued honestly, there would have been no margin, or need, for anti-conversion polemics.

Dayanand established a metaphysical connection between idol worship and casteism. While granting full ontological autonomy and reality to matter, he asserted vigorously that even so God could not be embodied in matter or confined to its limits. I wish to offer a social extension to this argument. The problem with idol worship is, what I suggest we call, 'the illusion of confinement'. It creates the illusion that God's presence is confined to the sanctuary or premises of a place of worship. Strangely, not many people wake up to the blatant contradiction between this and the key spiritual insight that God, being the Creator, cannot be confined within anything that man makes. What is not realised is that every form of representation amounts to, de facto, confinement. He/She is omnipresent and omniscient. God encounters human beings in the boardroom, bedroom and labour room alike. The pragmatic arguments advanced in support of idol worship apart, the net result of idol worship is a compartmentalised worldview and social order. Every instance of compartmentalisation is also act of annexation. We compartmentalise to exclude God from everywhere else, save from certain allocated locations. God and godliness are confined to places of worship and society is claimed by man and turned into a moral jungle. It would seem, as though, we are happy to build temples, mosques and churches, so that God can be excluded from society and we can claim the earth as our freehold. This is the connection between idol worship and endemic social injustice.

Historically, there is a striking correlation between the rise of man-centred power and the keenness to build places of worship, and to build them more and more impressively. Kings were keen to have the principal Temples, Cathedrals etc., located within political capitals. It served to spread the canard that God was partial to them and even under their control. Dayanand realised that there was politics or perversion lurking behind every form of representing the Divine.

We have the noblest of notions and ideals about human nature and destiny, but our track record has nothing to show for it. Take just one example, that of the plight of women – especially widows – in our society. In its pantheon and scripture, Hinduism idealises women, but the social plight of women is a different thing altogether. Small wonder, Swami Dayanand emphasised the need to educate girls and to allow widows to re-marry.

It is a great pity that the crucial spiritual agenda of social liberation launched by Maharshi Dayanand has fallen by the wayside. Had his followers, in the decades that followed, remained true and faithful to this mission, we would have been living in a nobler society today. Over the last six decades of our nationhood, evils like caste, communalism and the oppression of women have only increased quantitatively. Surprisingly, the Arya Samajis – barring rare exceptions – stand by and watch this choreography of corruption and depravity. At times, its communal fringe aids and abets

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the agents of obscurantism and intolerant fundamentalism. One gets the impression that the Arya Samaj is no longer in a liberative and transformative engagement with the Indian context, which is to be greatly lamented. The time has come to wonder if the Arya Samaj is now a movement or if it has become, for all practical purposes, a monument; set up on a pedestal, periodically maintained, but mostly forgotten. Monument, incidentally, signifies the death of a movement. It is, at best, a mummified finger that points to a movement that was!

Beyond any doubt, the Arya Samaj movement today stands at the crossroads. From here it can sink into further irrelevance or take the path of renewal and re-engagement. Ironically, the bane of the Samaj is its material wealth. It is saddled with substantial landed property and institutional assets. This, in itself, need not be a problem. But what turns this into a curse is the absence of a mission commensurate with the resources available. In this state, accumulated material resources sharpen the covetousness of those who carry the label of the movement but are spiritually alienated from it. It is this that has plunged the Samaj into self-defeating litigation and political polarisation. As a rule, wealth in the absence of a clear sense of mission becomes an end in itself. Material resources, which are meant to serve a cause, become God. This activates limitless and predatory covetousness.

The type of leaders a movement either attracts or produces is a significant pointer to the real plight of that movement. When it is healthy and dynamic, its leaders tend to be idealistic and visionary. But when it is sick, it attracts mercenary and ruthless opportunists, utterly unscrupulous in the pursuit of their vested interests. The living attracts fellow human beings; the dead, vultures.

From this arises the second major problem that the Samaj faces: the spirit of compromise, which kills its sense of mission. Covetousness perforce breeds a spirit of compromise. It has no use for any idealistic or theological consistency. In covetousness, personal profit is the sole motivating factor and whatever serves this purpose is welcome. Compromise of this kind is poison to the spirit of a movement. Unless it is contained and eradicated, it is sure to harm the movement. The Samaj now stands in urgent need to shake off the shackles of compromise and to assume the wings of commitment. Commitment was the magic of the Maharshi's personality and charisma. Often, while attending the public functions of the Arya Samaj I get the feeling that it is not heading anywhere in particular. Functions showcase the importance of leaders and an endless ritual of garlanding the big-wigs jostles the agenda almost out of sight!

The third problem facing the Samaj is the loss of its spirit and original vision. The Arya Samaj is a comprehensive socio-spiritual vision for evolving a noble society in India. In that sense, it is not a religion but a movement that has a global relevance. And the stage is now ready for it to play its rightful role at the global level. But to do that, the Samaj has to undergo a process of earnest self-evaluation and spiritual renewal. It has to capture the spirit of Dayanand. Dayanand should not be turned into an idol. He is not the goal. He was the voice crying in the wilderness, calling the people to renewal and regeneration. He was not beyond the limitations of his times. But it needs to be said to his credit that he tried to rise above them to the extent he could. The challenge he has given to his followers is to engage the given context from a perspective of spiritual

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rationality. It is to make the love, compassion, truth and justice of God prevail within the sinews and tissues of our collective existence and to bring all forms of oppression and exploitation, especially those practiced under the alibi of religion, to an end.

Maharshi Dayanand is a universal invitation to turn religion into an instrument for liberation and social uplift. He mandates a ruthless war on the forces of oppression and the agents of obscurantism that legitimise oppression. The Arya Samaj is a movement mandated to celebrate the nobility of the human species, based on an enlightened faith in God as the source of all reality and the guiding light of true humanity. Its relevance to our national scenario is a glaring reality. How far its present-day custodians realise this and have the courage to address this, only time will tell.

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